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FRONTISPIECE

Reculver Masterplan :Volume 1

Canterbury City Council (CCC)
- with additional financial assistance from East Kent Partnership

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CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

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introduction

Reculver is an historic settlement situated on the North Kent Coast, between Herne Bay and Margate. It has a rich history stemming from Roman times with human activity closely tied to the moving coastline, Christianity and, more recently, leisure. The settlement is bounded by Reculver Country Park to the west (with numerous regional, national and international designations) and predominantly farmland to the south and east. A Roman fort and ruined Saxon Church form a Scheduled Ancient Monument that is highly regarded as a key landmark in the area.

Reculver has reached a key point in its history as it has been highlighted as a potential strategic hub for a wider regional tourism and leisure strategy, especially for so-called 'green tourism'. There are several projects just starting improving cycle links connecting the Viking Coastal Trail to National Cycle Route 1 at Seasalter. The existing country park visitor centre has been allocated monies for a much needed extension to continue its development of educational work and highlight sustainability. The existing businesses - caravan parks, cafe, shop and public house are having to adjust to a shift in the profile of the visitor that comes to Reculver and are considering how to invest and develop for the future. A new coastal policy relating to flooding and sea defence, the Isle of Grain to South Foreland Shoreline Management Plan, raises key questions of the future usage of areas to the east (West Wantsum) as well as ongoing erosion to the cliffs in the country park.

In order to analyse and address these issues, as well as seeking to optimise the understanding and usage of the existing natural and historic assets, Allen Scott Limited (landscape architecture, environmental planning and urban design consultants) and Acorn Consulting Partnership Limited (tourism development consultants) were appointed by Canterbury City Council in September 2007 to develop a masterplan for the future of the country park.

1.1 Scope and Structure of Report
1.2 Process
1.3 Purpose

Masterplan Study Area

Bishopstone Glen

Eroding cliff line looking to Reculver Towers

Aeriel view of caravan parks and visitor centre

Viking Trail to Minnis Bay

1.1 Scope and Structure of Report

The Masterplan Report has been divided into two volumes. Volume 1 sets out the background, analysis and general proposals for the masterplan. It is intended to be a complete document that gives the reader a clear overview of the issues. Volume 2 is intended to be a flexible 'live' document that can be amended or added to on an ongoing basis. It consists of a series of project plans that make up the overall masterplan. However, depending on funding and/or changes in approach these can be implemented individually or in groups.

The study area is identified on the previous page, although there is reference to other projects/issues beyond these boundaries where appropriate.

1.2 Process

The masterplan vision has been developed in conjunction with the key stakeholders (refer Appendix A). Consultation has been an important element throughout the process with individual meetings as well as a stakeholder workshop being held. A wider consultation will be held on the completed masterplan document.

A review of the many policies and strategies that affect the site on a regional, local and detail level (Chapter 3.0) and a critical analysis of the issues (Chapter 6.0) have also informed the final proposals (Chapter 7.0).

1.3 Purpose

There are many types of masterplan. The aim of this masterplan is to provide a co-ordinated vision for the enhancement of Reculver.

It sets out principles for development in line with existing policies, aspirations of the existing stakeholders and existing and future funding streams. It is complimentary to projects already in existence and provides a framework for future changes to the physical environment as well as for improving the perception and management of the area.

As there are various stakeholders (public and private) and numerous potential funding streams the masterplan cannot be overly prescriptive. However, it gives design guidance on the various physical projects and will be adopted as a '*material consideration*' by the local planning authority in determining new applications.

Central Reculver, aerial view 1999 (photography by ukperspectives.com)

historical context

Reculver has a rich and interesting history with a regional and national interest . The strategic location on the edge of the Wantsum Channel initiated the early Roman settlement, followed by close ties with the development of Christianity at Canterbury. The influence of the changing coastline has always had an interesting influence on human activity at Reculver and will continue to do so in the future. This section highlights the key phases in Reculver's history and the relevance to the current situation.

2.1 Bronze Age to Late Norman
2.2 Coastal Retreat
2.3 Historical Significance
2.4 The 20th Century

The earliest evidence of human settlement at Reculver stems from pottery of the Middle Bronze Age (1000BC) and a farmstead located just west of the current church ruins. Some early Stone Age (100,000BC) flint tools have also been washed out of the cliffs further to the west.

Although there is no trace of it now (it may be under the sea by now due to erosion) the great King Ethelbert of Kent (and Queen Bertha) built a Palace at Reculver. Following the King's conversion to Christianity he gave his Canterbury Palace site (where the Precincts are now) to St. Augustine to build his Cathedral and himself removed to Reculver. Bronzes of King Ethelbert and Queen Bertha can be senn now at Lady Woottons Green, Canterbury.

2.1 Bronze Age to Late Norman

It is believed that a small initial camp was set up for an invading Roman Force under Emperor Claudius around 43AD. At that time the coastline was very different to today and Reculver (or Regulbium as named by the Romans) formed a strategic outlook on the edge of the Wantsum Channel separating the Isle of Thanet from mainland Britain. A walled fort was then built around 210AD which overlooked the Wantsum Channel and a harbour. The fort was approximately square measuring 170 x 180 metres with flint walls and outer ditches with timber palisades. There is evidence from excavations in the 1960's that there was a bathhouse, a barracks and a headquarters building with gates at the centre of each outer wall. In the headquarters there was a strongroom that contained pieces of an inscription that refer to Rufinus, giving an indication of the date of the construction. Also tiles with stamped initials CIB have been discovered that are believed to refer to the garrison *Cohors I Baetasiorium* who were stationed at the fort.

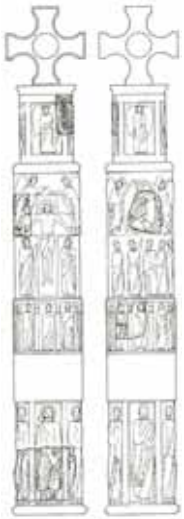
At the end of the fourth century the Romans left Reculver and the site was abandoned until, it is believed, the Royal Court of King Ethelbert took residence to allow the construction of the cathedral at Canterbury. In 669AD Egbert, the King of Kent, granted the land to Bassa to build a Christian monastery as atonement for murdering two of his cousins. A simple church with a nave and a semi-circular chancel was constructed, dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin. The two spaces were separated by a screen with 3 arches supported on two 4.2m high french limestone columns. A stone cross was added between the 7-9th centuries with intricate carvings depicting the Apostles and the Ascension of Christ. Fragments of the Reculver Cross as well as the limestone columns are currently in the Canterbury Cathedral. The Millennium Cross recently installed to the west of the King Ethelbert Inn is based on the original cross and commemorates 2000 years of Christianity

Viking raids in the ninth century caused problems with the monastic community and it was abandoned again until 949AD when it was handed to the Archbishop of Canterbury who turned St. Marys into a parish church.

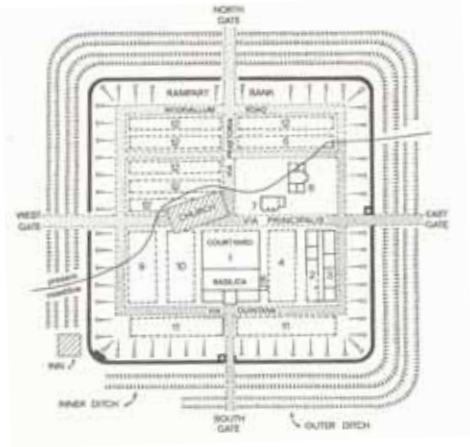
2.2 Coastal Retreat

In approximately 1200AD the twin towers were added to the church, supposedly as an aid to ship's navigation at the instigation of a Prioress from Davington who had been saved from drowning nearby. At this time the effects of coastal retreat were starting to show and continued through to the present day. It was reported that in 1540 the sea was a quarter of a mile from the church but in 1781 the north west corner of the Roman fort had collapsed. In 1809 the parish vicar decided maritime corporation, bought the towers for £100 to retain as a navigation aid. In 1925 the site was handed over to the Ministry of Works and substantial sea defence work carried out to prevent further erosion.

Columns in Canterbury Cathedral



Artists reconstruction of Reculver Cross
(English Heritage)



Reconstructed plan of the Roman Fort
(Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit)

1685 Map (Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit)

Eighteenth Century engraving by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck
(English Heritage)

2.3 Historic Significance

The Conservation Statement written by Dr. Liv Gibbs and adopted by English Heritage highlights the following as of 'considerable significance' (based on criteria set by J.S. Kerr in his book Conservation Plan 5th Edition 2000):

- Below ground remains of the mid first century ditches (nature and duration of fort's occupation);
- Third century fort as part of group of military installations possibly including Caister on Sea and Brancaster in Norfolk (plan, size, construction details and internal organisation); remains of walls useful as little remains at the other two locations.;
- Possible remains of Ethelbert's palace still to be discovered;
- Bassa's minster demonstrates early Christian practice of re-using important Roman or prehistoric enclosures; rare example of mid-Saxon minster with surviving standing remains; the ex-situ columns are an unusual system of superimposed drums rather than tall monoliths;
- Fragments of the Reculver Cross from early 9th century with highly accomplished figure carving;
- The late twelfth century twin towers demonstrate considerable investment for a parish church and many features typical of that period remain despite erosion; and,
- The towers are visible for many miles around and form a highly recognisable landscape feature.

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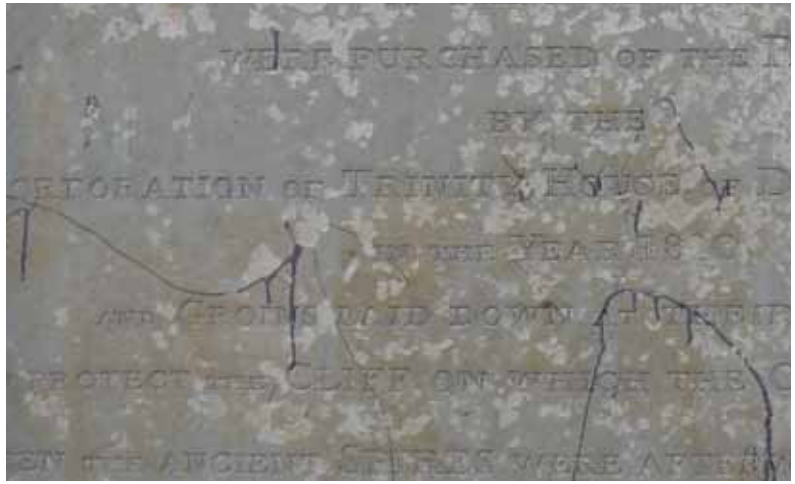
View of Reculver Towers from west
- highly visible local landmark

View of Reculver Towers from south
- extraordinary investment in tower construction for a parish church

View of Late Norman Church ruins looking east
- note column locations and semi circular chancel from the Saxon monastery



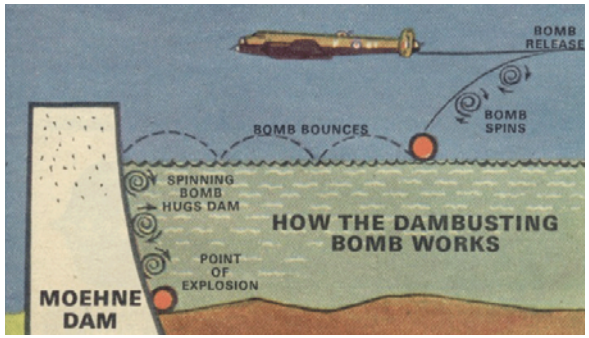
Extract of plaque commemorating purchase by Trinity House

Detail of Roman Wall
- clear evidence of construction method and materials

Roman wall on eastern facade
- identifies extent of main element of Roman Fort

2.4 The 20th Century

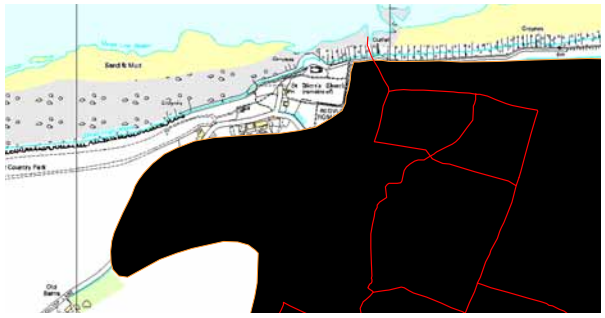
The twentieth century brought Reculver back into the limelight of British military history. During the second world war the coast off Reculver was used for testing of the famous 'bouncing bomb' for the dam buster raids on Germany. The reason for this was that the sea was so shallow at this point of the coastline that objects could easily be recovered at low tide.



How the Dambusting Bomb works

Bouncing Bomb in Dover Museum

Flypast of Lancaster Bomber



Extent of 1953 flood (from Environment Agency)

1953 Photograph showing extent of caravans and coastguard cottages (image displayed in Reculver Visitor Centre)

Photographs of holidays in Reculver
(from Flikr website ref Pie and Mash)

After the war Reculver took on a new use with the advent of caravan holidays. The Council set up a large site on the cliff tops to the west of the Reculver Towers. In its heyday in the 1950's and 1960's up to 1000 caravans were accommodated.

In 1953 there was a major flood in the area after a severe storm that breached the sea defences (refer map opposite).

In 1952 an extensive archaeological excavation was started on the site of the Roman Fort and late Norman Towers and continued in stages over many decades. The coastguards cottages were demolished leaving an open setting for the ruined church. In 1984 the scheduled ancient monument came under the care of English Heritage. Canterbury City Council have also carried out substantial sea defence works in various forms to further protect what remains of the fort in an ongoing battle against coastal erosion.

The creation of Reculver Country Park in the early 1980's resulted in the removal of the caravans from the cliff edge and establishment of new sites inland. Since this time there has been a slow decline in the businesses associated with caravanning. However, other leisure activities have become established in the area related to birdwatching, cycling and walking as well as the educational importance through the visitor centre run by Kent Wildlife Trust.

To this day, there are still three major static caravan sites that are looking to invest in the future economy of Reculver and part of the purpose of this masterplan is to create a vision for all uses in a sustainable, co-ordinated and economically viable manner.

policy framework

There are a significant number of international, national and local designations and policies that apply to the country park and its surrounding area. These generally serve to protect the positive characteristics of the area but they can be confusing and are frequently considered by the public to be very restrictive, especially on access, development and business investment.

This section briefly reviews the policy framework of the study area to provide a factual basis for understanding the aspirations of the authorities, to establish what the real constraints are and to provide a basis for assessing where opportunities may lie.

3.1 South East Plan
3.2 Canterbury District Local Plan
3.3 Other Documents of Note
3.4 Natural East Kent
3.5 Countryside Access Improvement Plan
3.6 Relevant Tourism Strategies
3.7 Flooding
3.8 Coastal Protection

Table: Barriers and Synergies

The masterplan vision and future development at Reculver will need to comply with the aims and purpose of the key relevant regional and district strategies, (and any updates to these policies and strategies), particularly for East Kent and within the Canterbury City Council district.
Reculver Masterplan seeks to make an assessment of the existing polices relating to Reculver but does not seek to further the SMP.

The South East Plan and the saved polices of the Canterbury District Local Plan First Review July 2006 (CDLP) are the two current statutory planning documents. The South East Plan is the statutory Regional Spatial Strategy (the regional arm of the development plan). It was approved and published by the government on 6 May 2009 and replaces the Kent and Medway Structure Plan in so far as Kent is concerned. The polices of the CDLP which have been saved beyond 13 July 2009 are also part of the development plan.. These have helped shape the most relevant strategy that covers Reculver; 'Natural East Kent', the objectives of which, along with the relevant regional and district tourism strategies, directly relate to the principles that underlie this masterplan.

3. 1 South East Plan

This is the overarching statutory policy document, that guides the emerging Local Development Framework and any updates to these policies and strategies. Some of the more relevant policies include:

- *Policy BE6: Management of the Historic Environment* - this requires local policies that support conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and encourages proposals that make sensitive use of historic assets through regeneration.

- *Policy TSR2: Rural Tourism, TSR4 Tourism Attractions and TSR5 Tourist Accommodation - a* range of tourism policies promote tourism and recreation-based rural diversification especially when providing jobs and if appropriate for the location. In addition they state that Local Authorities should support proposals to develop tourism opportunities and encourage the enhancement and upgrade of existing visitor attractions. With regard to tourist accommodation, TSR5 states that diversity of accommodation should be positively reflected in tourism and planning policy and that specific guidance should be given on location and type.

- *Policy NRM4: Sustainable Flood Risk Management* - this policy requires that the sequential approach to development in flood risk areas is followed in accordance with PPS25 (central government planning guidance) and that where development is proposed an assessment, in accordance with Environment Agency advice, is undertaken to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the flood risk.

- *Policy NRM5: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity* - this requires that any loss in biodiversity is avoided and that opportunities for gain are actively pursued. The highest level of protection is to be given to internationally and nationally designated sites and damage to other habitats avoided wherever possible and with mitigation provided where it is not. It also ensures that appropriate access and maintenance of green networks and open space is provided.

- *Policy NRM8: Coastal Management* - this policy requires an integrated approach to coastal planning and management cautions against prejudicing options for managed re-alignment. It also encourages authorities to realise

There are also a number of Canterbury City Council policies and other statutory authority policies and designations that will restrict and/or encourage the use and development of the country park. Many of these are directly related to the physical attributes of the area, such as zoned areas of flooding, whilst others guide social and economic development.

- *Policy CC8: Green Infrastructure* - This policy is considered at 3.4 Natural East Kent

3.2 Canterbury District Local Plan 2006

The Local Plan has a number of policies concerning the protection and role of the countryside and the need to promote sustainable rural communities in an improved and managed countryside environment. It defines both the economic and development framework as well as the environmental constraints.

Perhaps most key to this masterplan is Policy R13 (see highlighted box) which states the Council's view that the Reculver area has more to offer by way of further investment and attraction, to promote in particular, leisure pursuits and activities, and the increased and improved use of the land and seafront. New housing development however, is not considered appropriate in Reculver due to the potential for flooding in the area.

Canterbury City Council Policy R13:

Proposals to further enhance the attraction of Reculver as a destination for visitors, in particular leisure and open air recreational proposals, will be permitted by the City Council subject to design, visual and environmental impacts, and suitable access arrangements.

The view of the Council, as stated in the Local Plan, has been an important element in commissioning the masterplan and to establishing the most suitable proposals for the future of Reculver. The following environmental designations, covered by policies within the Local Plan and will however limit or restrict certain proposals:

Bishopstone Cliffs and inter-tidal zone
-the focus of environmental designations

3.2.1 **RAMSAR, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Designations**

RAMSAR and SPAs are international and European nature conservation designations respectively that are recognised by the UK government and covered by Policy NE1 in the Canterbury Local Plan. They are primarily aimed at preserving habitat for migratory and wetland birds. In a national context these are reinforced by Natural England's designation of SSSI which provides statutory protection to sites with flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features.

At Reculver the Bishopstone Cliffs, (including the grass fields at the top of the cliffs) and the inter-tidal foreshore are covered by the Thanet Coast SSSI and managed as part of the country park. The SSSI covers a number of features of interest including wintering birds, terrestrial and marine plant species and invertebrates, the Bishopstone Glen feature (which is the only one of its kind on the North Kent Coast) and the exposed cliff top which, due to the hay mowing regime, supports a large area of coastal grassland containing some nationally scarce plants. The cliffs also expose various formations of geological interest which contain a range of plant organs and a rich fossil fauna making it one of Britain's most important palaeobotanical localities.

3.2 Canterbury District Local Plan 2006 *continued*

Natural England has defined buffer zones around the SSSI where Canterbury City Council will protect and take reasonable steps to further and enhance the features of special interest and consult Natural England on planning applications.

There will be a general presumption against any development that is likely to infringe upon or harm the value of these sites. However, proposals that seek to support the regeneration of Reculver and a wider appreciation of the scientific value through such things as sensitive access for the public, interpretation and

3.2.2 **Undeveloped Coast and Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV)**

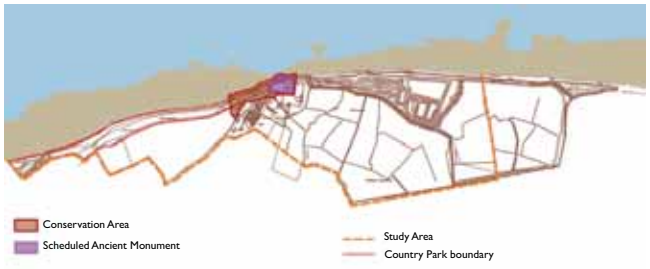
These designations recognise the importance of the scenic coastline at Reculver and the distinctive landscape of the Wanstum and are protected against development that might harm or detract from these qualities through Policies C36 and R7 in the Local Plan respectively.

3.2.3 **Scheduled Ancient Monument and Conservation Area**

The Roman Fort, (including the Towers and an area within the Camping and Caravan Club), is given statutory protection by English Heritage as a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and this is enforced through Policy BE14 in the Local Plan. This policy restricts development that might affect the monument or its setting and in the event that development is permitted will require archaeological investigation prior to works taking place.

The Camping and Caravan Club are intending to improve caravan facilities within the site, (which is leased from Canterbury City Council), and have been in discussion with the Council regarding the scope of archaeological investigation which is likely to extend beyond the SAM boundary.

Overlaying the SAM and extending west across the central area of Reculver to the Blue Dolphin caravan club site is a Conservation Area designation covered by Policy BE7 in the Local Plan. This designation recognises the special historic character of the area and protects the buildings and the setting from inappropriate development. The Towers, King Ethelbert pub, visitor centre and toilets and the Blue Dolphin club house all fall within the area.



3.2.4 **Flooding and Coastal Protection**

Whilst Local Plan policies also cover flooding and coastal protection these issues are considered more fully overleaf in 3.7 and 3.8 due to the potential significance and influence on the masterplan of both fluvial and sea flooding.

3.3 Other Documents of Note

3.3.1 **Canterbury District Community Strategy 2006**

The priorities of the Canterbury District Community Strategy include the need to:

- Maintain green, clean, safe and active public spaces
- Support the development of quality tourism in the district
- Promote and protect the countryside for living and working
- Provide better services for children and young people.

These aspirations have shaped the objectives of the Reculver Country Park Management Plan and in turn this masterplan.

3.3.2 **Cycling Strategies**

Strategies that promote Reculver as one of four cycling hubs in the region, are:

- The Cycling Strategy for Kent 2006-2011
- The Canterbury Walking and Cycling Strategy.

Whilst Kent County Council's Cycling Strategy is focused on cycling as an alternative to the car, the policies that support its delivery are 'facilities, safety, promotion and education' which are still relevant to Reculver in relation to:

- Signing and marking
- Cycle parking
- Integration with public transport.

The focus of the Canterbury strategy is to implement a network of safer walking and cycling routes include creating cycle routes that link to the National Cycle Network. The cycle route that passes through Reculver is the Viking Coastal Trail (Regional Cycle Route 15), and a route is proposed to join it to National Cycle Route 1 at Seasalter.

The potential for Reculver as a cycling hub in the region is also being considers as a concept along with at least four other existing countryside access sites, by Natural East Kent (NEK).

3.3.3 **Reculver Country Park Management Plan 2007-2012**

The Reculver Country Park Management Plan sets out four key management objectives for the Park to 2012:

- To develop Reculver Country Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets identified in the Canterbury Tourism Strategy
- To achieve national standards of excellence for Reculver Country Park
- To involve the community in the management of the country park
- To manage Reculver Country Park sustainably.

The Management Plan has been central to providing direction to this masterplan and the delivery of the masterplan projects will enable the Management Plan to meet its targets.

Influences on the Masterplan:

- *Only appropriate development that respects the existing environment and demonstrates clear improvement is likely to be acceptable*
- *Development will need to be environmentally responsible and take into account existing and future flood risks*
- *Development is unlikely to be acceptable within the designated areas unless associated with enhancement, access and appreciation of their value.*

3.4 Natural East Kent (NEK)

NEK is a partnership project with objectives linked to Policy CC8 on Green Infrastructure stating that,

'Local authorities and partners will work together to plan, provide and manage connected and substantial networks of accessible multi-functional green space. Networks should be planned to include both existing and new green infrastructure. They need to be planned and managed to deliver the widest range of linked environmental and social benefits including conserving and enhancing biodiversity as well as landscape, recreation, water management, social and cultural benefits to underpin individual and community health and 'well being'.
The successful designation and management of green infrastructure will be particularly important in areas designated as regional hubs, where growth may impact on sites of international nature conservation importance(14)or where there is a need to enhance the existing environmental capacity of an area'.

NEK's key objectives are to:

- effect regeneration through the environment and heritage assets of the area
- improve the quality of life for local communities
- encourage green tourism

Reculver is defined as a key heritage area and, combined with the existing and planned network of walking and cycle routes, NEK proposes it as one of four cycling hubs in the region, but recognises further work is needed and the general limitations of the site to expansion.

Reculver's role in the region wide development of East Kent as a green tourism destination is central to NEK's work. The objective is to create access to good connections across the region for walkers and cyclists, to provide good interpretation of natural and heritage assets and to support the private sector to provide good quality accommodation.

Development in context will avoid geographical polarisation and imbalance of facilities provision, as well as traffic and visitor pressure to one particular site. Development of this site alongside others will ensure that there is a rational approach to facilities and to the development and promotion of the access network. There is a potential to develop a range of visitors services, and information links from Herne Bay and Whistable, as well as encouraging cycling to Reculver.

The masterplan reflects these objectives, acknowledging Reculver as a high quality green tourism destination with strong links to the surrounding area. Reculver has the assets to support this vision and with strong leadership all stakeholders could experience benefits from the development of the Country Park. The validation of these principles are considered further within Section 4.0 Tourism and Market Assessment and Section 5.0 Critical Appraisal.

The NEK Vision:

'By 2025 East Kent will be an internationally recognised visitor destination for wetlands, coastal, downlands and woodland wildlife. It will be a model of sustainable land use and rural regeneration, acting as a magnet for both specialist and recreational visitors, who love its hospitality, its walking and cycling trails, and wealth of history, traditions, culture and natural assets. East Kent residents will be justifiably proud of their place and won't want to live anywhere else.'

3.5 Countryside Access Improvement Plan

Kent County Council's Countryside Access Services Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP) aims to protect and enhance routes and paths for residents and visitors by negotiating enhancements and protection through development.

CAIP proposes to increase the usage and enjoyment of public rights of way and green spaces countywide. The plan aims to support and develop a network of paths that provide a gateway for visitors and residents to explore Kent's heritage , wildlife and iconic landscapes. The plan supports the regeneration of Kent by delivering improvements which contribute to reducing congestion and supporting rural business and economy, education, health and most importantly, the quality of life of the people in Kent.

Improvement plans are a statutory mechanisms created by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000. Relevant objectives include:

- M10 Effectively manage access land and open green space.
- D3 Proactively work with developers and local and regional planning authorities to protect and enhance existing public rights of way and green space, and advise on proposals for new green infrastructure.
- D4 Develop multi-user routes that allow walking, cycling and horse riding from towns to the wider countryside.
- K3 Produce and distribute information on circular walks and health walks.
- K7 Work in partnership to improve regional/ national/ international awareness of walking, cycling and horse riding opportunities in Kent, to directly support tourism objectives.

3.6 Relevant Tourism Strategies

The Kent Tourism Development Framework was completed in April 2009 to address the area's poor perception and include strategic objectives for coastal Kent including Reculver. The objectives reflect the need for a more diverse visitor offer taking into account new trends in visitor demands and activities such as eco-villages, high quality self-catering accommodation and a more diverse camping product.

The Canterbury District Tourism Strategy (2003-2006) describes the vision '*to enable tourism to benefit the community, visitors and the environment, economically, culturally and sustainably*'. The overall aim is to identify ways to encourage visitors to stay longer, either overnight or, more appropriately for Reculver, to stay for a longer day trip.

The strategic aims that most closely relate to Reculver are to:

- Promote regeneration

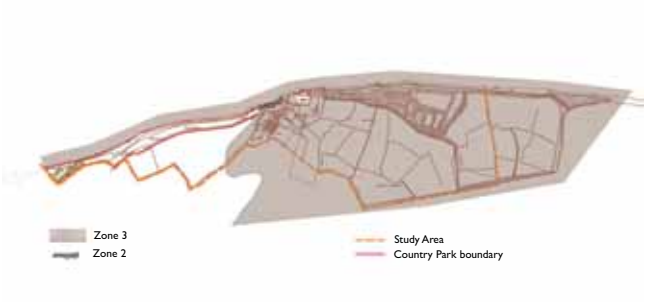
Influences on the Masterplan:

- Cater for changing demands of the visitor market - growing demand for quality, eco-friendly products and a more diverse product
- Need to increase visitor numbers, spend and seasonality
- Address perception and promotion of the area
- Focus on green tourism including walking, cycling and heritage.

3.7 Flooding

The Environment Agency identifies areas that are technically at risk of flooding. Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 25 defines the flood zones as:

- Zone 1- little or no risk with an annual probability of flooding from rivers and the sea of less than 0.1 %.
- Zone 2 : low to medium risk with an annual probability of 0.1-1.0% from rivers and 0.1- 0.5 % from the sea.
- Zone 3 : high risk with an annual probability of flooding of 1.0 % or greater from rivers, and 0.5 % or greater from the sea.



Much of the centre of Reculver including all of the caravan parks and West Wantsum fall within potential flood zones designated by the Environment Agency (EA), the majority of the area being in Zone 3 (see inset above and diagrams opposite).

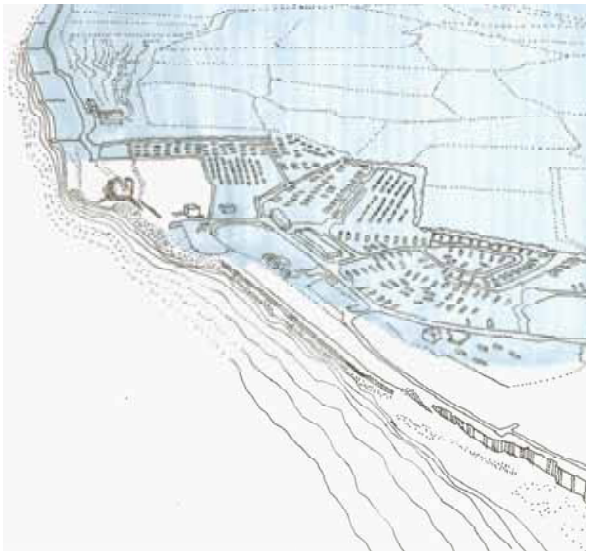
Policies C32 and C33 in the Canterbury Local Plan restricts any development on sites not previously developed but does accept minor infill and development on existing sites within these zones usually subject to drainage impact assessments and flood risk assessments and any views expressed by the Environment Agency.

Development in the West Wantsum area will need to be in accordance with projections under the Shoreline Mamagement Plan (SMP) and its further amendments.

During the preparation of this masterplan it was felt that the planning implications could be significant for any proposals so a consultative meeting was held with the EA to determine more detailed influences. These are recorded in the 'Influences' inset overleaf.

In addition, and as a result of the masterplan process, Canterbury City Council commissioned Herrington Consulting Limited to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment for Reculver (March 2008) to determine a better understanding of the flood issues to assist future proposed developments at Reculver. The report is available for local businesses and the public to use, and whilst it is recommended that the report be considered in detail before any firm development proposals, it concludes that;

'The risk if flooding has been considered across a wide range of sources and it is only the risk of coastal flooding that has been shown to have any significant bearing on the development. However, when this risk is examined in detail, it has been demonstrated that with appropriate mitigation, the development can be made safe and will not increase the flood risk elsewhere'.



Illustrative view of combined flood zones

3.8 Coastal Protection - The Shoreline Management Plan

The North Kent Coast Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) has been drawn up by the coastal local authorities, the EA, Natural England and other organisations with a direct role in shoreline management. The Plan was adopted in 2008 and the 'Isle of Grain to South Foreland' SMP section covers the Reculver study area. Development of the SMP will be via the SMP process and not the Reculver Masterplan.

The length of coast line in the Reculver study area falls within three management 'units' with different short, medium and long term aims. Whilst subject to future socio-economic, environmental and technical considerations the proposals for each 'unit' are:

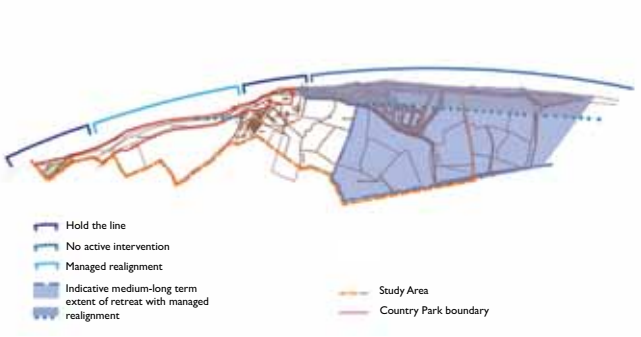
From Herne Bay to Bishopstone Manor (4a12 of the SMP) the policy is to hold the line to protect the Herne Bay seafront, property, infrastructure, amenity and other urban assets along this section of the coast.

Reculver Country Park (4a13 of the SMP) refers to the eroding cliffs west of the Blue Dolphin to Bishopstone Lane, which are of high conservation, landscape and recreational importance. The long-term recommendation is to allow continued erosion of the cliffs, which will maintain the geological exposures and landscape quality of the frontage.

West Wantsum (4a14 of the SMP) includes properties, local industries, footpaths, agricultural land and freshwater habitats. The short-term policy is 'hold the line' by maintaining and upgrading defences and management practices, despite anticipated ongoing sea level rise and limited feed of beach building material. The short-term policy is also to develop a more sustainable approach to intensive beach maintenance at Coldharbour. In the medium and long term (in excess of 20 up to 100 years) the plan is to realign the defences east of Reculver Towers, allowing the shoreline to retreat in a controlled manner, under a policy of managed realignment. No specific realignment 'line' has been defined but a maximum extent has been identified (see map). Managed realignment assumes the construction of a secondary seawall to prevent the risk of large scale flooding to backing hinterland, and to protect the railway line, the A299 Thanet Way and the residential areas in Boyden Gate and Marshside. Realigned defences will require appropriate periodic maintenance.

At Reculver Towers and the small section of coast west to the Blue Dolphin, the plan is to continue managing the erosion and flood risks, under a policy of 'Hold the line'. This will maintain the international heritage assets and manage the risk of inundation. Reculver Towers will remain defended for as long as is technically, financially and environmentally viable.

For a full description of the policies of the SMP, please refer to the SMP.



Illustrative diagram of management units at Reculver

Influences on the Masterplan:

- Local Plan policies seek to create new, or improve existing, wetland wildlife habitats where these complement flood risk reduction measures. There are potential long term benefits for the country park in green-tourism, the local economy and wildlife if significant wetlands were created as part of a managed retreat policy in West Wantsum.
- A future review will be carried out by the EA on managed retreat within West Wantsum and possible secondary defences, so there is no detail available at present. However in principle the masterplan could promote the creation of a wetland which would also be considered beneficial by the EA subject to necessary flood implications upstream and consultation with the Internal Drainage Board and landowners.
- Shoreline Management Plan policies may adversely affect opportunities for production of arable crops under medium to long term projections.
- Development in the West Wantsum area will ned to be in accordance with the SMP and its future amendments.
- The Herrington Consulting Ltd flood risk assessment for Reculver will assist local businesses to make informed decisions and provides a level of surety for the masterplan proposals for further development within the caravan park frontages and pub land to extend the tourism accommodation offer. The report assists further consultation on development proposals and assures that there will be no major objections from the EA.
- Seasonal holiday accommodation is considered the same as residential in PPS25 vulnerability classification.
- Improvements to the visitor centre would not be a cause for concern to the EA and therefore the masterplan could consider various options.

BARRIERS AND SYNERGIES

Barriers *caused by designations that may restrict improvements to the country park and local businesses:*

Scheduled Ancient Monument:
- The local perception is that nothing can be done whatsoever to the Towers and Roman Fort area. The policy actually only restricts development likely to harm the monument or its setting.

Conservation Area:
- Similarly local perception is that very little can be achieved. Proposals need to demonstrate that they are 'appropriate' and respect the setting.

SSSI, (inc Ramsar, SPA and LNR):
- Perception varies but these policies are generally accepted as 'good'. They will restrict any development that may harm the value and additional enhancement may be required.

Landscape Quality:
- The policies will presume against development that detracts or harms the special qualities of the landscape and coast line.

Flood Zones and Coastal Protection:
- Tight restrictions on any residential development, including tourist accommodation although permission may be granted subject to assessment.
- The 'do nothing' and 'managed retreat' options for sea defences are perceived locally with sceptism although local businesses, particularly the Oyster Farm, appear to be largely unconcerned.

Other strategies:
- There is little understanding among local businesses as to the NEK and range of strategies in place for tourism etc.
- Whilst the park is clearly used and enjoyed there is local sceptism as to the value of it as a park (i.e.: 'it lacks facilities') and of its maintenance. This suggests that local businesses have not engaged with the CP Management Plan or see their own role in such strategies.

Synergies *created by designations that may benefit improvements to the country park and local businesses:*

Scheduled Ancient Monument:
- On-going protection of the monument ensures a well-known 'brand image' and visitor draw is retained which can be exploited by the park and local businesses to attract increased numbers.

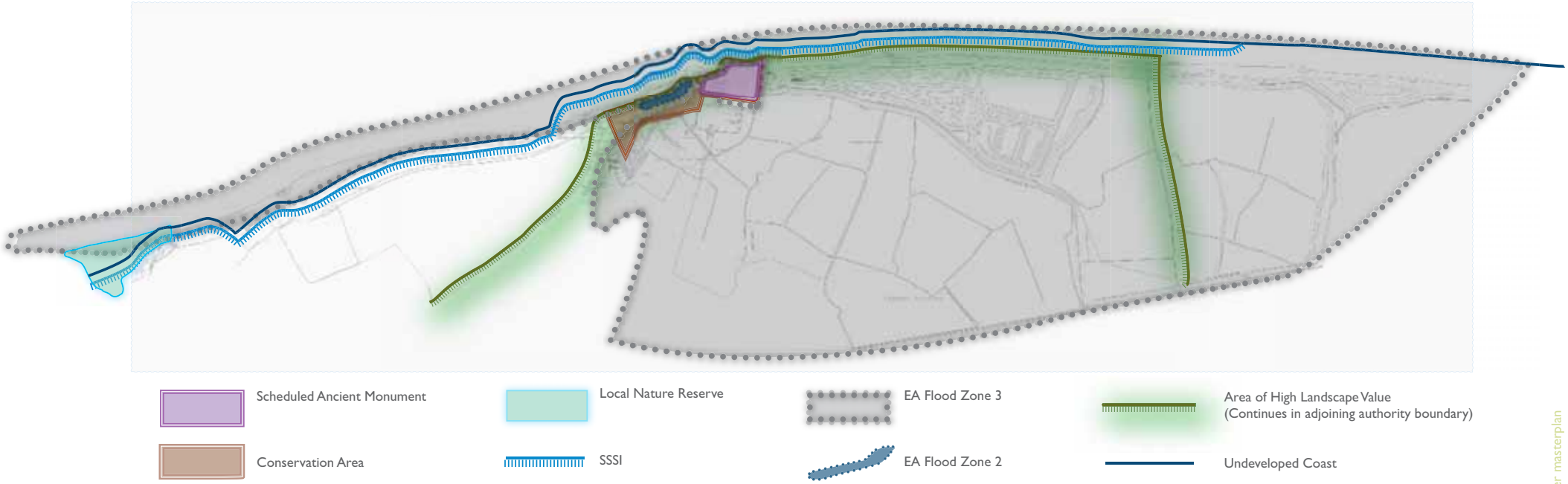
Conservation Area:
- The policy ensures that only suitable development which enhances the central area and therefore the image of the park and businesses can be brought forward. An improved built environment will also attract more visitors

SSSI, (inc Ramsar, SPA and LNR):
- Better promotion and interpretation of the wildlife and geological value may attract more 'green' tourists linking well with the tourism strategies.

Landscape Quality:
- Promotion of walking and cycling within the area also links well with the green-tourism strategies.

Flood Zones and Coastal Protection:
- Alternative visitor accommodation is possible and may be distinctively designed to respond to flood issues and sustainability aims, linking well with green-tourism strategies.
- Managed retreat of West Wantsum could be positively handled to create a major eco-attraction which will draw a new market segment and critical mass to support green-tourism and the local economy.

Other strategies:
- Promotion and dissemination of key information from the relevant strategies direct to local businesses will help to galvanise a common aspiration and support for a vision.
- Some small scale response to local concerns on maintenance would improve working relations and perceptions of various interests in the park.



Combined heritage, environmental and flood designations

the existing study area

Reculver Country Park is perhaps best known and visited for its impressive Reculver Towers and its commanding frontage looking out to the North Sea but there are also a range of businesses that operate in Reculver, a wider heritage interest and variety of habitats, which may not be as widely used or appreciated as they could be.

There is also a sense that within the core area, the aging infrastructure, its facilities and some of the visitor attractions have lost what once may have been considered to be 'faded charms', and are now perceived to be just old and tatty.

This section reviews the physical components of the study area to provide a factual basis for understanding what the real constraints are and to make assessments as to where opportunities may lie.

4.1 Topography, Landscape and Sea
4.2 Heritage, Land Use and Built Form
4.3 Transport, Walking and Cycling

The physical components of Reculver Country Park are both man-made and natural from the Towers and the caravan parks to the managed grasslands and the inter-tidal beach flats. It is this mix that gives Reculver its identity as well as its comparative sense of remoteness between Margate and Herne Bay originating from its place in history as the 'corner' of England overlooking the Isle of Thanet.

People's use of the land and the natural processes of coastal erosion and deposit have shaped Reculver as we know it today and has led to the various policies and designations described in Section 3.0 and which intend to protect and nurture those continuing uses and processes.

4.1 Topography, Landscape and Sea

The study area divides into two main topographic areas with the Towers at the centre located on a knoll of locally higher ground approximately 10m above mean sea level.

West of the Towers the land rises from around 5m to 35m towards Bishopstone creating the grassy upper slopes contrasting with the unstable cliffs and the inter-tidal mud and sand flats below. Locally the cliffs are incised by a stream course that has created the Bishopstone Glen feature.

East of the Towers the land drops sharply to low flat agricultural fields that were once underwater and navigable as the Wantsum channel and now lie just 2-3m above mean sea level. This area is protected from the sea by the Northern Sea Wall defences and from inland flooding by a tidal sluice gate near the Seasalter Shellfish Hatchery. The land is extensively drained with a network of ditches around two main water courses, North Stream and the River Wantsum. Also of note in the far west of the study area is a saline lagoon to the north of the sea wall but protected by shingle ridges known as Coldharbour Lagoon.

It is the constant erosion of the cliffs by the sea and the periodically exposed inter-tidal foreshore that provides the geological interest and important sea-bird habitat that is behind the conservation designations.

Similarly the low lying topography is very much influenced by the sea with much of the flat agricultural fields and the caravan parks falling within the potential flood zones (refer 3.7-3.8 above).

Topography

Main Landscape Types

- Significant trees and hedgerows
- Coastal grassland
- Managed grass
- Agriculture
- Agriculture - on drained land
- Inter-tidal zone

View east - Oyster Farm and West Wantsum

Lagoon

4.2 Heritage, Land Use and Built Form

Reculver's topography and its relationship with the sea has also influenced the area's land use and its built form.

The Roman Fort and subsequently the Towers were located here for Reculver's strategic position and together are now the centrepiece of heritage interest. Subsequent use of Reculver as a vantage point saw coastguards cottages located here on what is now the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The main land use was, and still is, agriculture with the Blue Dolphin Club House being originally a farmhouse. Like most accessible coastal areas the area has also attracted leisure visitors drawn by the sea and the views. When the Country Park was established and the conservation significance of the cliff tops became recognised the caravan parks that had been located there since the '50s were moved onto fields in their current location. The cheaply constructed club buildings that served the caravans were of their time but, with the decline of the market, now appear sad and poorly maintained.

Similarly the public toilet blocks in the centre were cheap functional buildings of their time and the conversion of one into the Visitor Centre, although economic, has never really functioned very well or presented the right image for the Country Park.

A café which is open all year round provides a popular destination for visitors, motorcyclists and cyclists.

At slight odds with the quality of the Towers is the functional industrial-type buildings of the Oyster Farm to the east. Whilst of low visual quality they are set low into the sea defences and hence do not cause significant intrusion in views.

As a result of these periods of change and the connections between the area's use for strategic reasons, agriculture and leisure there is a diverse range of building types from the historic Towers and re-used farm buildings to static caravans and near-derelict cheap club houses.

Although not within the study area, the nearby church of St. Mary the Virgin is worthy of comment as an important local amenity and landmark.

Land Use and Ownership

Towers

King Ethelbert Pub

Blue Dolphin Club House

Visitor Centre and Toilets

Waterways Caravan Park frontage

View over Waterways

4.3 Transport, Walking and Cycling

Reculver Lane is the only road into Reculver centre and is fairly narrow in places leading to some concerns on its capacity for further vehicles particularly touring caravans. It is hoped that a new school car park will ease traffic flow by the Reculver School. The main car park for the Reculver Country Park is adjacent to the King Ethelbert pub with a grass overflow adjacent to the Visitor Centre and there is an events overflow on the grass slope behind the Blue Dolphin. There are two other smaller car parks to the country park, generally used by local people within the Herne Bay area, at Bishopstone Lane, Bishopstone and Ocean View near Beltinge, Herne Bay.

There is also a bus service operating from Herne Bay which drops off and picks up adjacent to the King Ethelbert pub.

The area is very popular with dog walkers, families and couples with several named path and cycle routes. There is public access throughout the country park although scaling the cliffs is discouraged with signing. The public rights of way within the study area are named recreational trails:

The Thanet Coastal Path - follows the northern sea wall.

Saxon Shore Way (part coincides with the above) - a 160 mile (257km) long distance trail that within the vicinity of the study area follows the coastal edge from Herne Bay, turning inland in the vicinity of the Towers to follow the edge of the Great Stour. It is named after the line of historic fortifications that defended the Kent coast at the end of the Roman era.

Wantsum Walk (part coincident with the above) - broadly follows the edges of the River Wantsum flood plain inlcuding part of the higher ground to the south of Bishopstone Manor. It runs for 8 miles (12.8km) from Herne Bay to Birchington. The route is divided between clifftops and sea wall, leading to paths within the country park. Inland are panoramic views of the low-lying marshes and dykes. There are strong connections with the former Wantsum Channel, which separated the Isle of Thanet from the mainland until Medieval times.

Cycling routes include:

The Viking Coastal Trail, Regional Cycle Route 15, - a 32-mile (51km) long circular route around the Isle of Thanet peninsular. The coastal stretch from Pegwell to Reculver is 21 miles (34 km), and the inland route from Reculver to Pegwell is 10 miles (16km).

A shorter traffic-free stretch of the route is along the sea wall from Margate to Reculver (9 miles/ 14 km) via the popular beach at Minnis Bay (4 miles/ 6.25km from Reculver)

Canterbury City Council are currently extending the cycling route through the centre of Reculver. A purpose built cycleway has been constructed along the promenade near the Visitor Centre and crossing over to the southern edge of the events overflow car park and through the country park towards Herne Bay.

Public Rights of Way

Reculver fits well within regional cycling routes

Reculver Lane

Cycling group gathering in main car park

tourism and market assessment

This section analyses the current situation for tourism at Reculver based on consultations by Acorn Consulting and drawing on previous work by Canterbury City Council. Local, regional and national trends are considered in their relevance to the future development of Reculver.

5.1 Visitors to Reculver Country Park
5.2 Visitors to Herne Bay
5.3 Visitors to Margate
5.4 Demographics of Local Population
5.5 Tourism Market Trends
5.6 Market Segmentation

5.1 Visitors to Reculver Country Park

Who visits?
Between 100,000 to 150,000[1] people visit Reculver Country Park each year with most being families with young children, or people over 55 years old. Only about 1 in 7 visitors go to the visitor centre[2] although the visitor centre receives around 20,000 visitors a year. Around half are adults and the other half is made up of children and students.

Useful statistical information:

- 80% of people visiting Reculver are from Kent[3] . In 2007;
  - 14% came from Canterbury
  - 7% from Reculver
  - 6% from Herne Bay
  - 10% of visitors were staying at the Reculver caravan parks.
- 76% of visitors have visited before
- 24% visit every 2 to 6 months
- The majority of people stay at the country park for more than an hour
- Nearly half staying for more than two hours
- People who stay for longer than 4 hours tend to be fishermen, who stay all day.

Why do they visit?
The main reasons for visiting the country park are:

- Scenery (75%)
- Relaxation (48%)
- Enjoying time with their families (45%)
- Wildlife (43%)
- To spend lunchtime (42%)
- Exercise (40%)
- Cycling (17%)
- Walking the dog (13%)

How do they get there?
The number of people arriving at the country park by car is decreasing with the proportion of car drivers dropping from 90% to 76% since 2001. Of interest is the number of cyclists which has doubled in the past three years from 6% to 12%.

1 Reculver: Country Park Management Plan 2007-2012, Section 2.2 Visitors; and Connecting Herne Bay – Options Consultation Document April 2007, Section 2.2 Places to Visit
2 Reculver: Country Park Management Plan 2007-2012
3 Reculver Visitor Satisfaction Report, Summer 2007

5.2 Visitors to Herne Bay

The majority (55%) of people who visit Herne Bay during the summer come for a day visit and stay for 4 to 6 hours, which gives them time to visit attractions, eat and explore. Many of them (40%) are over-65 and don't spend much money in Herne Bay, except for buying food and drinks.

If visitors do stay overnight (15%) they tend to stay for 5 or more nights and stay either in hotels or with their friends or relatives.

Reculver Country Park is considered to be one of Herne Bay's main attractions but most visitors aren't aware of it. In fact, before arriving in Herne Bay more people had heard of the seafront and bandstand than of Reculver.

Reculver offers visitors sea air, sightseeing, open spaces and an escape from the crowds – all the things people look for from a visit to Herne Bay. Yet less than 10% of visitors to Herne Bay plan to visit Reculver Country Park during their visit, indicating the need to promote the country park and Towers to potential visitors.

However with more than 70% of visitors not looking at any information about Herne Bay before they visit, it will also be important to promote and sign the country park and Towers to visitors already in Herne Bay and raise awareness amongst serviced accommodation providers and local residents (who are both potential day visitors and who act as hosts for visitors) of the country park and its facilities.

5.3 Visitors to Margate

Margate attracts day visitors from the UK, and only a small number of holidaymakers. On the whole, day visitors stay in Margate for around 5 hours, not long enough to include a trip to Reculver.

Margate's visitors tend to be from the lower socio-economic groups and travel in groups of two adults. They usually arrive by car although around a quarter come as part of an organised group or coach party.

In 2004 day visitors to Margate spent around £13.50 per day and staying visitors spent around £15.50 plus their accommodation (totalling of around £37).

Around one fifth of visitors to Margate stayed overnight and these people mostly stay in serviced accommodation (70%) or stay with their friends and relatives (27%). These overnight visitors tend to stay for around 8 nights, or longer (12 nights) if they come from overseas.

5.4 Demographics of the Local Population

The ward of Reculver, part of the non-Metropolitan District of Canterbury has 3,300 households and a population of just fewer than 8,000 people.

Compared to the national average, Reculver has a high proportion of white, Christian residents. Nearly a quarter (22%) of residents are retired and a similar proportion has a long-term illness.

By contrast, the demographics of the wider District that includes the city of Canterbury show a high proportion of students and, compared to the national average, a high number of people employed in education.

There appear to be two main potential day visitors groups amongst the local population if the profile and perception of Reculver could be improved:

- Older local residents who might enjoy short walks around Reculver, particularly if they are fully accessible; and,
- Residents from the District who may be attracted by innovative interpretation of the site and facilities, such as outdoor activities and a good quality food and drink offer, that appeal to a younger audience.

Summer events organised by Canterbury City Council

5.5 Tourism Market Trends

The following trends in visitor markets are of relevance to Reculver:

- A general decline in domestic tourism;
- A shift in the UK tourism market from long holidays to short breaks;
- Increasingly numbers of cash rich/ time poor people looking for high quality value for money short break experiences;
- A move in consumer spending towards experiences and activities, including holidays, short breaks, days out and eating out;
- The overall ageing of the population, with the growth in the empty nester and early-retired 55-64 age group with time and money for leisure breaks, fuelling the growth in the leisure break market;
- A greater concern for health and fitness, with particular growth in active outdoor pursuits, such as walking and cycling;
- Growing concern for the environment and a growth in popularity of 'green accredited' businesses;
- An increasingly knowledgeable, sophisticated, discerning and demanding population, with rising expectations of quality and service;
- Increasing travel and holiday taking by disabled people;
- Growing usage of the Internet, to research and book holidays and leisure experiences;
- New opportunities for the marketing of tourism businesses and destinations online;
- A growing trend towards last minute booking, impulse short break decisions, and increasing demand for special short break offers;
- Increasing competition within the UK market, and from European short break destinations served by low cost airlines;
- Visiting Friend and Relatives (VFR) continues to grow, particular amongst young people;
- Activity and special interest holidays are increasing; and,
- Coach holidays and day trips likely to increase, driven by an ageing population.

In order to appeal to an increasingly competitive domestic market, a destination such as Reculver will need to offer a range of experiences and activities, supported by good quality, value for money accommodation, food and drink establishments and interesting interpretation.

The opportunity to deliver regeneration through green tourism is reflected in the strategic approach of Natural East Kent and is central to the objectives of this masterplan.

5.5.1 **Domestic Tourism**

Of possible note for tourism businesses in Reculver is research published in October 2007 that forecast expenditure on domestic travel and tourism to drop by around five per cent in 2008 to £19.91 billion, however, with the recent decline in the economy this is likely to be less than envisaged.

UK tourism also faces the ongoing appeal of holidaying abroad through increasing competition in package holidays and flights, and the increasing range of holidays and destinations available. All these attractions of holidaying overseas will work against the domestic tourism market, however the current weakness of the pound against the euro is making continental holidays more expensive, and some domestic operators are reporting a strong start to 2008 due to the exchange rate with the euro and concerns about the credit squeeze.

Whilst these give some mixed messages for businesses in Reculver there is clealry a need to offer a high quality and distinctive tourism 'offer'.

5.5.2 **Short Breaks**

Short breaks are growing and in recent years around two-thirds of all staying trips in the UK have been short breaks. Better-off couples, both pre- and post-children, dominate the market, with city destinations being especially popular.

Canterbury is already a popular short-break destination and in the longer term Margate has the potential to attract the short break market. The appeal of both these destinations could be increased by promoting the walking, cycling or birdwatching opportunities at Reculver as a convenient day out.

5.5.3 **Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR)**

The VFR market is one of the largest growth sectors of the tourism industry at present both in terms of the number of visitors it generates and the amount they spend in the local economy.

For Reculver, where visitors mostly come for the day from the local area, a positive perception of the Reculver by local residents will encourage them to visit the park with their friends and relatives that stay with them.

5.5.4 **Sustainability – Green Tourism**

A combination of environmental legislation and increased media coverage means that there is an increasing awareness of the need for sustainable development within the UK. From a business perspective it is now widely recognised that reducing resource use and increasing efficiency reduces business costs and increases profitability as well as providing a positive marketing message.

There is mounting evidence to suggest that the 'green' or 'ethical' tourism market is growing. Recent research by South West Tourism shows 11% of consumers saying that they'd actively look for a an attraction or place to stay that was part of a green accreditation scheme, with a further 67% stating they'd be happy to visit a 'green accredited' business, using it as a 'deciding factor' when making their choice.

Reculver and its businesses are well placed, with the quality environmental and cultural context, to offer a 'green' destination.

Devon tourist businesses have found that the introduction of 'green' or 'sustainable' practices has lead to an increase in business, profitability, repeat visitors and referrals.

The growth of the Green Tourism Business Scheme both nationally and within Kent indicates that local tourism businesses, particularly accommodation providers, now recognise that they can benefit from both savings in running their businesses and from the promotional value of being 'green'.

5.6 Market Segmentation

For regeneration to take place at Reculver new developments will need to respond to market trends. Market segments that could be attracted to Reculver are assessed in this section with a brief overview, followed by a review of the current facilities at Reculver and the opportunities to improve them.

5.6.1 **Access for All**

The disability market is substantial; around 10 million people in the UK have a disability recognised by the Disability and Discrimination Act and they spend at least £50 billion a year. Natural England aims to develop the countryside so that it is inclusive for all users and Tourism South East want the south east to be seen as a leader for accessible tourism.

Market Opportunity: Well-marketed accessible facilities and activities could attract a substantial number of new high spending visitors as well as providing good quality facilities for an ageing local population.

5.6.2 **Bird Watching**

Bird watching or avitourism is the most popular wildlife watching activity. There are over 2 million bird watchers in the UK alone, of these over one million are members of the RSPB, which has a growing youth membership of over 150,000.

Whilst bird watching is popular with all ages, the aging population, which will lead to the fittest and wealthiest generation of over 55's in history, will also support the growth of wildlife-watching generally, as this market segment is particularly attracted to it.

Any increase in visitor numbers is to be managed sensitively to avoid disturbance to the european features of this internationally important site for wildlife.

Existing facilities:

- The sea wall between Reculver and Minnis is an important site for viewing migratory birds during the spring and autumn, including many rare birds.
- Currently a notice board of wildlife sightings is organised by the Kent Wildlife Trust and positioned outside the visitor centre.

The most important facility for birdwatchers is up-to-date posting of bird sightings. Sightings posted immediately onto the Internet can attract more birdwatchers to the site where the birds have been seen, as well as generating wider interest.

Facilities that could attract more bird watchers to Reculver include:

- Interactive computers located at the visitor centre to attract bird watchers already in Reculver into the visitor centre, as well as encouraging additional enthusiasts.
- Telescopes, manned by volunteers, can attract new bird watchers; the RSPB have found that telescopes are particularly appealing to children.
- Courses and instruction for amateur birders, for example in recognising waders, increases visitors knowledge and interest.

Targeting bird watchers could bring Reculver more off-season visitors, an important consideration for local businesses that suffer from the seasonality of visitor markets.

Longer term, if additional salt marsh and reed-bed habitats are created and the West Wantsum area becomes a designated Nature Reserve, there could be substantial opportunities to develop the bird watching activities at the country park, particularly if organised in conjunction with the KWT or RSPB.

5.6.3 **Caravanning**

Holidaymakers using static caravans are usually married, over 45 years and tend to be from lower income groups. Touring caravans are also popular with married couples over the age of 45 years who consider it a good way to meet people.

Thirteen million camping and caravanning holidays were taken in the UK in 2006 making them an important part of the domestic holiday market accounting for nearly a third of all holidays taken in the UK. However, overall the market is decreasing with 18% less people taking camping and caravanning holidays in 2006 than in 2002. The sector is over-reliant on the declining domestic holiday market and it is predicted that the decline in the sector will continue.

Caravanning in Reculver:
In Reculver there are between 300 to 400 static caravans located at three caravan sites: Blue Dolphin, Waterways and the Camping and Caravanning Club site. It is estimated that about 40% to 50% of the static caravans are lived in on a semi-residential basis, for up to 11 months a year. The remainder are used on a regular basis by couples and families from Kent and south east London.

Despite the large numbers of caravans on the site there are only about 14 caravans are currently available for outside hire. In addition there is no self-catering or bed and breakfast accommodation available, so visitors looking for short breaks are not able to stay in Reculver.

It is expected that the Camping and Caravanning Club site will be developed to include around 100 touring pitches. This would change the nature of the visitor market in Reculver, making it more transient and potentially increasing the amount that visitors spend in the locality. The Camping and Caravanning Club estimate that a touring pitch can generate around £45 per night spend in the local economy, in addition to the cost of the pitch fee. The development of the Club site will therefore be central to developing new audiences for Reculver.

New Audiences:
The trend is for people on caravanning and camping holidays to interact with their destination more than in the past. These visitors want natural, cultural and sporting activities. There is scope to enhance Reculver as a destination by improving interpretation of the site, promoting local walks and cycling routes, bird watching and other locally available sporting activities.

Younger visitors are inclined to want a 'designer twist' to attract them and hold their attention. Alternative accommodation such as designer caravans, camping pods or teepees may provide an opportunity to market the area to new audiences.

Opportunities:
Reculver could provide a wider range of accommodation than is currently available including touring pitches, self-catering and bed and breakfast accommodation. The provision of innovative, quality accommodation could act as a driver for attracting a wider range of higher-spending visitors.

Facilities at the caravan sites that may attract higher spending audiences include the provision of Wi-Fi Internet, a swimming pool and a good quality restaurant.

5.6.4 **Cycling**

Access to bicycles is widespread and a continuing public interest in health and fitness and protection of the environment indicates that the cycle industry should show significant and sustainable growth in forthcoming years.

Sustrans, the UK's leading sustainable travel transport charity has promoted the use of the National Cycle Network that has shown a steady growth in size since 2000. Sustrans Route User Monitoring Survey of 2006 showed that there were 168 million cycling trips on their routes, and that walking and cycling trips have increased 5.3% over the previous year.

One of the main barriers preventing the spread of cycling is the lack of awareness regarding cycle routes. This is particularly prevalent amongst families who seek a safe off-road environment for cycling. Traffic free cycle routes are a good way of introducing people back to cycling; 14% of people using traffic free routes are returning or new to cycling compared to just 2% on the routes that contain traffic[1] . To enhance awarenes of cycling routes, an objective of the Masterplan is:

- to assist and be included in promotional material (including that produced by Explore Kent and Sustrans).

1 Sustrans Route User Monitoring Survey 2006

5.6.4 **Cycling** continued....

Production and distribution of information on circular routes as well as improvements to cycling network and supporting infrastructure are also part of the wider strategy endorsed by Kent County Council's Countryside Access Service in the document, Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP), which supports the regeneration of Kent by delivering improvements which contribute to reducing congestion and supporting rural business and economy, education, health and the quality of life in Kent.

Some steps have been undertaken towards the increase in traffic free cycling routes by KCC/Jacobs with the proposed cultural trail cycle route from Whitstable to Margate using the Viking Coastal trail, and a new path along the Wantsum Walk and Saxon Shore Way via Marshside and St Nicolas at Wade.

For any new routes constructed, long term maintenance responsibility will need to be addressed at the planning stage with KCC.

Who Cycles?

The majority of cyclists are between 15 and 44 years with the 35-44 year age group age group being the majority with most doing it for its good health and fitness ethos. Cycling is also very widespread amongst families and slightly more men cycle than women.

The older age groups do not cycle in such large numbers however by 2010 England's population will be heavily skewed toward the over 55's and the cycling market could exploit this. The over 55's are becoming increasingly conscious of having a healthy active lifestyle and cycling as a low impact, fitness enhancing and sociable activity meets the criteria.

Links to the National Cycle Network

- National Cycle Route 1 currently runs from Whitstable to Canterbury and on to the coast at Sandwich, where it links with the Viking Coastal Trail, and carries on to Dover.
- It is planned that the Viking Coastal Trail will be extended from Reculver to Herne Bay to join the NCR 1 at Whitstable.

Local facilities
The existing facilities available in Reculver for cyclists and walkers are:

- Public toilets
- Drinks, meals, tea and coffee at the King Ethelbert pub
- Teas, coffee, snacks, lunch at the Café
- Newspapers, ice cream, sweets, postcards from shop
- Interpretative literature at the visitor centre

The nearest stations are Margate and Herne Bay, which link well to the Viking Coastal Trail.

There are currently no hire facilities at the country park, the nearest bike hire shops are at Minnis Bay and Margate.

Opportunities

Improved signage:
- At the country park
- From Herne Bay, Minnis Bay and Margate.

Facilites:
- Improved interpretation
- Cycle parking
- Cycle hire and servicing
- Cycle route literature
- Café and shop targeted at 'green tourists'.

Accommodation:
- Cyclist friendly accommodation.

Marketing:
- Put Reculver on the map: create trail maps, website information that is focused on Reculver as a start/finishing point for circular routes and as part of a Kent-wide network of routes, and features the facilities available. For example feature Reculver on the Viking Coastal Trail website (www.vikingcoastaltrail.co.uk) so that historic attractions and refreshments at Reculver feature on 'Points of Interest' and 'Refreshment Stop' searches;
- Create local itineraries; and,
- Work with local accommodation providers to offer local information on walking and cycling and places to eat and drink en route, and
- Linked promotion with Explore Kent and Sustrans.

New routes:
- Circular routes that start/finish at Reculver
- Reculver to Richborough
- Facilitate improvements and development to National Cycle Route 1 and the Viking Coastal Trail.

5.6.5 **Education and Learning**

The education and learning market extends across all age groups from pre-schools to universities as well as training, continued professional development and life-long learning.

Formal Education:
The schools market is currently being well catered for by Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT) who operate from the visitor centre and provide an active education service to around 5,000 pupils and students each year. The age range varies although the majority of pupils are from Key Stages 1 and 2.

Informal Education:
As well as being delivered by schools and colleges, education can be delivered on a more informal basis through community groups, local societies or privately run courses. KWT runs a programme of events for the public that attracts family groups and individuals. However they are dependent on volunteers to be able to run their programme effectively.

Current Interpretation:
Reculver is an important site for its geology, history and wildlife. It offers the opportunity to provide interpretation on a wide range of themes.
Currently there is limited interpretation on the site itself and KWT provides the interpretation in the Visitor Centre.

There are only two interpretation boards at the eastern end of the country park near the car park, provided by Canterbury City Council. One board is located near the Towers and provides a brief historical outline of the site.
The other is positioned on the sea wall and provides a location map. English Heritage provide a small interpretation sign and a combined pamphlet on Richborough and Reculver.

Opportunities

The current provision of education to schools is limited by the size of the visitor centre, and the budget the KWT has from Canterbury City Council. The centre has limited opening hours from September to March and is closed on Mondays in the summer.

In future, if more space and facilities were available, KWT would like to provide interpretation on:

- Sea Scene: Windfarm, Cooling Towers, Forts, Sandbanks, Estuary;
- Environment: Geology, Natural History, Changing habitats, Energy, Recycling, Climate Change, Sea Defences;
- Gateway for Natural East Kent and Living Landscapes; and,
- Local heritage: Reculver Towers to Richborough and Wantsum Channel.

There is scope to provide a wide range of additional interpretation themes and events to the general public within the country park and additional education markets could be tapped if more space and resources were available at the visitor centre.

5.6.6 **Fishing**

Angling has one of the highest rates of participation in the UK, in terms of sports activity, with almost 6 million anglers.

According to the 2005 Public Attitudes to Angling Report, published by the Environment Agency, there are about 3.5 million freshwater anglers in England and Wales and another 4.4 million potential freshwater anglers interested in going fishing in the future.

There were also three million sea anglers, with some participants being both saltwater and freshwater anglers. Anglers are predominately male with a relatively high proportion aged 15-24 years.

Interest in fishing is particularly high amongst young people aged 12 to 16 years. Key factors that encourage potential participants to take up the sport are 'knowing somewhere local to go', 'information on how to fish' and 'somewhere to take children'.

There is also evidence that angling fits with other recreation activities, with 58% of those surveyed agreeing that it fits in well with cycling and walking.

Facilities at Reculver

- Reculver provides both sea and fresh water fishing, however while sea fishing is easily accessible from the beach, freshwater fishing requires permission from local landowners.
- Waterways Caravan Park website promotes fishing as one of the activities available in the area although course fishing is currently offered at lakes and a river within five miles of the caravan park.

Opportunities

- Angling fits well with the walking and cycling activities that are being promoted at Reculver
- The provision of river fishing licences could be an opportunity for local landowners to benefit from the waterways on their land
- There could also be the opportunity to offer rod hire and tuition, possibly combined with a bike hire facility.

5.6.7 **Walking**

Walking is not only the most popular outdoor recreational activity it has the highest penetration of any sports activity in the UK. According to the National Statistics in 2002, 46% of all adults had participated on a walk of two miles or more over the previous 12 months and 35% had done so in the previous four weeks.

Walking also has a wide social appeal that transcends social classes and age groups, although middle income groups are the most likely to go walking. In terms of lifestyle the highest penetration is amongst couples whose family have left home.

In 2003 Visit Britain found that eating and drinking out, walking and visiting friends and relatives were mentioned as the three most popular activities for countryside tourism day visits.

Local facilities

There is a network of promoted walks that run through Reculver (refer 4.3) and a series of connected walks along the prom/beach and clifftop from Herne Bay to Reculver.

In addition to these long distance walk several more local routes are promoted on the Kent and Canterbury websites www.kent.gov.uk and www.canterbury.co.uk,

- Reculver Walk – 5.6km/ 3.5 miles
- Minnis Bay to Reculver - 6km/3.7km one-way, a linear walk along the seawall.

There are numerous walks promoted by individuals on the Internet. A wide range of publications already exists for walks around Reculver for example Walks in East Kent and the Saxon Shore Way both cost £4.99 and are available from the Kent County Council website.

Opportunities

Reculver could be developed as the centre for a wide range of walks suitable for people looking for:

- Fully accessible walks suitable for wheelchairs
- Short circular walks
- Medium length walks
- Long distance walks

Some improvements to existing paths would be necessary, particularly to make them fully accessible. In addition there is a need for:

- Better signage of routes from car park
- Improved pre-trip promotion of Reculver based walks, pulling together existing literature
- Availability of walking trails at the visitor centre, shop and pub

The market exists for destinations offering a range of well-signed walking routes with the good provision of places to eat and drink.

critical appraisal

This section ties together the influencing policy and the physical constraints and opportunities of the study area with the economic steer from the tourism and market assessment results. The aim is to establish a clear way forward, a realistic strategy that builds on existing strengths and attractions and feedback from the consultation process to ensure a fully deliverable masterplan can be realised.

6.1 Repositioning Reculver as a Green Tourism Destination
6.2 The Caravan Parks
6.3 Car Parking
6.4 Access Road
6.5 Extending the Country Park
6.6 Landscape and Open Space Opportunities
6.7 Built Environment Opportunities

There are a number of perceived issues and barriers to the regeneration of Reculver including the conservation designations, English Heritage, flood risk, the narrow access road and inadequate parking. There are also a number of separate businesses and developments at Reculver some of which are investing in improvements and others which are struggling.

The significance of some of these barriers and the actions needed to overcome them are considered which, with a range of physical and branding improvements, will create synergies between the country park, the wider area and the businesses, to add value and pursue a united vision for Reculver.

6. 1 Repositioning Reculver as a green tourism destination

The decline in Reculver's traditional caravanning market is a reflection of a decline in consumer demand for camping and caravanning holidays. In 1990 the closure of Canterbury's coastal caravan site, and the removal of 250 caravans, in favour of a green space policy, significantly reduced the number of visitors using local businesses.

Since 1996 ten businesses in Reculver have closed including a coffee shop, a pie and mash shop, a restaurant, bar, two amusement arcades, a betting shop and two prize bingo's. The remaining shop and café are struggling to keep going with leaseholders changing each year. The Club at Waterways Caravan Park now only opens at weekends and one night a week during high season. These businesses can no longer afford to maintain and renovate their premises and sections of the Club are boarded up. The overall appearance of these buildings is off-putting to visitors as they arrive in Reculver.

The increase in green space and reduction in the number of caravans has brought a different type of visitor to Reculver. Visitors come to enjoy the open spaces and coastline, to walk and cycle, they come to fish and bird watch. The visitors that are now attracted to Reculver are looking for a different experience to the betting shop, bingo and amusement arcades that were so successful in the past. Visitors are now looking for higher quality facilities that fit their outdoor activities and need good quality short-term visitor accommodation to enable them to stay and enjoy Reculver for longer.

The owners of the Blue Dolphin Caravan Park are currently investing in their site with higher quality 'log' cabin caravans and a well presented club house with covered swimming pool, exclusively aimed at the senior market.

The Camping and Caravanning Club site also expects to invest substantially in it's site and offer 100 touring pitches. This will have a marked positive effect on the number short-term visitors to Reculver.

The change in the visitor market at Reculver from traditional static caravans to more 'green tourism' will require a change of direction for the businesses at the site. High quality services and visitor accommodation are needed to support the future growth of a hub for green tourism and education.

A Market Driven Approach for Reculver

The underlying trends in the visitor market, together with the growth of the birdwatching, cycling, education, fishing and walking market segments creates a wide range of opportunities for Reculver.

To capitalise on these market opportunities there will need to be a shift away from the traditional static caravan visitor towards providing accommodation and facilities for the growing 'green tourism' audiences who demand quality and value for money.

6.2 The caravan parks

Associated with the decline of the traditional static caravan market, the visual quality of some of the sites have declined and an associated rise in real and perceived vandalism and other anti-social behaviour has been reported.

The removal of all or part of the caravan sites to create a better environment for Reculver's 'heart' and to extend the country park were considered as one of the options for this masterplan.

However, there is an overriding consideration for the current and proposed investment in two of the three caravan parks and the potential these improvements have in increasing competition between the parks to raise the quality of their sites and the type of customer. Their value as existing businesses, the caravanning community and the critical mass of people that they could bring to support other parts of the local economy, are also important factors.

Through this masterplan it is hoped that the caravan sites can see the value in the vision of Reculver as a green tourism destination and take positive steps to improve their image, particularly the road frontage, and be encouraged to invest in alternative types of accommodation, new attractions targeted at the new customer and to convey their commitment to sustainable 'green' credentials as the core businessess within a country park with national heritage, geological, landscape and wildlife interests.

SWOT ANALYSIS - refer also to 'Barriers and Synergies' table on page 14.

STRENGTHS

Site:
- Mostly gentle topography for walking, cycling, wheelchairs and buggies
- Scenic sea views and landscape
- Cultural heritage

Visitor numbers:
- 100K -150K visits per year
- Visitor Centre – 20K visitors per year
- 3K school children
- 300 holiday static caravans

Local population:
- High proportion of students, teachers in Canterbury district
- Local population – retired – have time to visit

Attractions:
- Reculver Towers are one of Herne Bay's (few) attractions: Towers can be seen from Herne Bay and are floodlit at night – acts as a draw for visitors
- Herne Bay Beach
- Rich cultural heritage
- Sea, small beach areas and rocks

Activities:
- Good network of footpaths and cycle routes
- Walking:
  - Saxon Shore Way: long distance walking route
  - Wantsum Walk: Herne Bay to Canterbury via Stour Valley Walk
- Cycling:
  - Viking Coastal Trail: Regional Cycle Route 15 soon to be linked from Reculver to Herne Bay. Can then link to National Cycle Route 1 at Seasalter
- Fishing
- Riding at Minnis Bay
- From Herne Bay:
  - Sailing, jetski, trips to Kentish Flats and sea forts, seal spotting
  - Pier Sports Centre – roller hockey and skating, international competitions
  - Herne Bay carnival and festival in August, much is on the water

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of Accommodation:
  - Lack of visitor accommodation in and close to Herne Bay (10 serviced, 5 graded, 5 ungraded) + 10 self catering
  - 14 caravans for hire only
  - Lack of variety in accommodation at Reculver
- No known active community groups
- No major attractions in immediate area, nearest are Margate and Canterbury
- Limited selection of places to eat, especially of good quality, in and around Herne Bay
- Lack of activities in poor weather
- Unattractive road frontage
- Poor public transport from Herne Bay (station) to Reculver
- Poor interpretation
- Lack of activities eg, children's playground to keep people for longer in the Park
- Car parking charges – too low to generate much revenue (£13.5K) ; irritating pricing structure
- Reculver not featured on Viking Coastal Trial website
- Two diverse markets: day visitors and long term staying visitors
- Low recognition of Reculver amongst visitors planning to visit Herne Bay.

THREATS

- Sea level rise - reference Isle of Grain to South Foreland SMP
- Decline in traditional static caravan market
- Lack of communication between stakeholders
- Lack of direction from authorities
- Vandalism

OPPORTUNITIES

Accommodation:
- Good quality accommodation and public transport could attract more people and new audiences.
- C&C Club site could improve quality.
- Touring caravan site could generate revenue for the local ecomony.
- With more visitors there could be scope for providing a mini-supermarket and additional place to eat/ drink.
- Offer innovative quality accommodation to attract 'green tourists' such as 'Podpads' and 'Ourhouse' - new styles of quirky, eco-friendly holiday homes.
- Develop B&B in pub outbuildings; quality short let self-catering accommodation
- Private landowners: alternative camping sites

Businesses:
- Quality Mini-supermarket – local produce, crafts, gifts etc
- Offer quality place to eat
- Green Tourism Business Scheme – training opportunities for businesses? Feasible for C&CC or caravan parks?
- Tours of the oyster farm
- Field Studies Centre

Interpretation:
- Increase interpretation on site
- Wildlife
- SMP policies-managed retreat to the east of the towers could present opportunities for marshland creation in 20 plus years time, no active intervention to the west of the towers will allow exposure of geological features - both of these policies present opportunities to add to the interpretation and green tourism value to the site.
- Kentish Flats – wind power, environmentally friendly power generation
- Bouncing bomb
- Reconstruction on Roman site – using grassed over fort site, south of towers

Cycling:
- Co-ordinate and market walking and cycling routes
  - Eg, Arrive by train at Margate, cycle to Herne Bay station via lunch at Reculver
  - Link to NCR 1 at Seasalter via extension of Viking Coastal Trail to Herne Bay
  - Reculver to Richborough
  - Short circular pub routes, promote for off-season

Cycling continuing:
- Cycle centre: service station, cycle hire
- Sponsorship of cycle parking
- Work with local community/ local cycling organisations to support cycle events eg National Bike Week, charity/ recreational rides.

Signage:
- From within the country park
- From Herne Bay, Minnis Bay and Margate
- Improve signage for walking and cycling routes and to on-site businesses
- Better promotion and connectivity with East Kent area:
  - Country Break itinerary
  - Hidden Britain site

Promotion:
- 'Put Reculver on the map'.
  - Feature cycling and walking routes that start/ finish at Reculver
  - Promote any accessible routes/ facilities
- Promote Reculver to:
  - Serviced accommodation providers in Herne Bay and Margate
  - Coach company's who bring tours to Herne Bay and Reculver
  - Local residents – Herne Bay, Margate and Canterbury

Public transport:
- Improve public transport from Herne Bay station – would attract more people who arrive by train to stay at Reculver
- Visitor Payback Scheme: car park revenue used to fund park developments (eg, Seven Sisters Country Park)

Management:
- Strong leadership, co-ordinated management

Markets:
- Caravans/campers
- Cyclists
- Walkers
- Growth in Eco-tourism
- Birdwatchers
- Formal Education
- Informal education – students/ lecturers from Canterbury
- Access for all

Funding:
- Potential funding streams including European
- Private investment

6.3 Car Parking

Car parking within the hub is considered to be under-provided by local businesses who report that at peak times there is not enough spaces (potential visitors / customers are reportedly put-off coming due to a previous experience or have been seen to turn around and leave). Whilst increased car parking will increase visual impact and might jeopardise the use of more sustainable transport methods, it seems reasonable to assume that with an aim to increase visitor numbers and site quality, that arrival by car is going to remain the only realistic choice for most visitors.

The location of the core car park is also considered to be detrimental to the setting of the coastal edge and the Towers. Alternative locations that may provide a modest increase in size, as well as less visual impact have therefore been investigated.

A: On the King Ethelbert Inn land with overflow potential onto the Camping and Caravan Club parking site adjacent to it.

For: Deep within the 'heart', under-utlised land and overall size.
Against: Private land and setting of the Towers.

(Option A is merely shown to have been considered as an alternative and no further development of this consideration is proposed.)

B: On the existing overflow car park in front of the visitor centre.

For: Association with visitor centre, reduces traffic further into 'heart', adjacent to events overflow parking, CCC owned land.
Against: Only modestly larger.

Option B is adopted within the limits of Masterplan (subject to further development including planning approval and funding) - see Project Plan 8

C: On the existing events overflow car park.

For: Concrete road in place, overall size and CCC owned land.
Against: More visually intrusive than other options.

D: Agricultural field adjacent to rear of the Blue Dolphin.

For: Removes cars from the core altogether, overall size.
Against: Private land, rising ground, perceived distance from visitor centre and Towers.

Preferred option:
Option B is preferred as it creates the best link to the heart and the visitor centre with the least visual disturbance to the more sensitive coastal edge and has expansion options using the existing events overflow area.

Option D might be considered as a future possibility if wider attractions were very successful and visitor numbers increased.

6.4 Access Road

The width of Reculver Lane is perceived as a problem by local businesses in attracting greater numbers of visitors, particularly towing caravans, due to lack of passing places. The primary school in Hillborough exacerbates this problem at parents drop-off and collection times due lack of parking in the school area.

There is signage to the country park from the Thanet Way but it is considered lacking at the Maypole Road junction and at Hillborough.

Whilst major road improvements are very unlikely to be funded there is reasonable opportunity to create at least two passing places along Reculver Lane subject to CCC highways approval.
Because much of the access routes to Reculver is in 'Sunken lane' with high grass banks, creating effective passing bays will require some structural regrading or retaining elements. Funding for such improvements may be sought through S106 contributions. Any funding from Kent Highways Services is likely to be focused on maintenance of the existing route, poor condition of which is likely to be exacerbated by any increase in traffic.
Similarly additional and improved signage relating to a re-branding of the country park is readily implementable.

6.5 Extending the Country Park

'Where is the country park?' is a question that some visitors, whilst standing in the core of Reculver, have reportedly asked members of local businesses and organisations. This suggests that the brand and extent of the country park is not clear and that there is a general assumption that a 'park' should have 'recreational facilities'.

The masterplan has considered these perceived shortcomings and proposes:

- Improvements in branding, promotion, interpretation and signage;
- A central playground associated with the visitor centre; and,
- The physical extension of the park to attract a wider visitor interest.

The physical extensions are considered in two areas and are both long term:

West Wantsum: there is an opportunity to turn the 'managed realignment' constraint imposed by the Shoreline Management Plan into a positive proposal to create a major new saltmarsh and reedbed wetland. The principle is endorsed by the Environment Agency and Natural England and in the longer term, developed as a significant bird habitat could become a managed KWT/ RSPB reserve attracting new visitors and reinforcing the green tourism credentials.

Bishopstone Manor: the fields between the Bishopstone cliffs and Reculver Lane could be brought into the country park and managed for new access and habitats. However, much of the interest is in the coastal edge rather than inland and current visitor numbers and the need for extra land, unless for a very positive purpose (as above), does not appear to be justified. In the longer term however, due to coastal erosion and changes in demand, incorporating this land should be further considered.

Reculver Lane

School

View from the Towers east over the Oyster Farm and West Wantsum

The perceived 'heart' of the country park lies naturally within the area between the Towers and the Blue Dolphin, encompassing the pub and the visitor centre. The area lacks the visual clarity and quality that a heart should have, with only the Towers and the sea providing any immediate sense of place. The masterplan should retain and enhance the existing good characteristics whilst aiming to remove and replace the poor characteristics with facilities and attractions that reinforce the vision of a high quality green-tourist destination.

6.6 Landscape and Open Space Opportunities

Within the core public areas there are four spaces with clear characteristics that can be strengthened and enhanced:

1: The Towers and Roman Fort - whilst a clear space the majority of the Roman Fort to the south is flat grass and tends to be little used. The perception is that few visitors either use it or appreciate its historical form and context despite some outstanding views east across West Wantsum and west towards the cliffs.

- Interpret the original layout of the Fort and the Wantsum Channel; and,
- Increase access and interpretation of the Towers.

2: The Coastal Edge - the focus of most visitors tends to be on the relationship to the sea and hence the coastal edge is where people gravitate to. The scenic landscape quality, as well as the environmental value, of this edge is also recognised and protected within the policy framework. The existing car park is currently the only intrusion.

- Re-locate car park away from views, prime seafront edge and Towers setting;
- Interpret the value and diversity of the Ramsar, SPA and SSSI; and,
- Provide further seafront seating and consider sheltering from wind and rain.

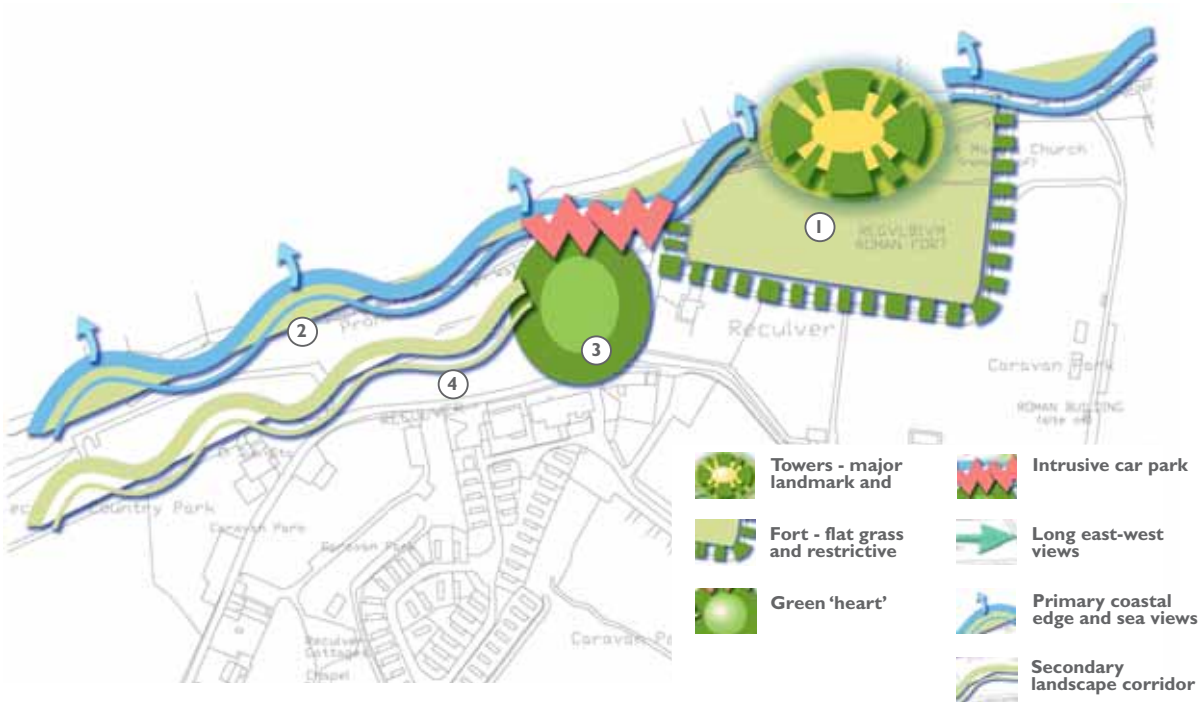
3: The Green - the centre of the 'heart' provides picnic tables and a setting for the built edges but poor clarity and function due to the car park, raised edges peventing access and unnatural landforming.

- Re-locate car park to increase the clarity of the 'heart';
- Remove edging and associated planting to forge a better relationship with the visitor centre, seafront and built frontage edges creating a more traditional 'village' green with a strong sense of place; and,
- Consider widening the visitor appeal with improved facilities such as a playground and the proposed improvements to the visitor centre.

4: Secondary Landscape - the temporary grassed car parks to the south of the coastal edge are tatty and contribute little to the landscape quality.

- Use space more positively with higher quality 'sustainable urban drainage scheme' (SuDS) type car parking and a clearer landscape framework providing a setting for the core arrival point and the visitor centre

THE HUB



Roman Fort - no existing interpretation

Coastal edge and car park

The 'Green' - poor edges

Secondary landscape behind coastal edge

THE HUB

6.7 Built Environment Opportunities

Within the core public areas the Towers remain the key element of built heritage and the focus of the historic setting. Also important to the heart of the space are the Blue Dolphin Club House (a) and the King Ethelbert pub (b), which whilst both might be improved, do provide distinctive 'bookends' to the central core.

The bulk of the static caravan areas (c) could not be considered to be quality built environments but are nevertheless popular second homes and provide a community for Reculver, and a quiet rural resort character. Whilst there are opportunities to diversify the accommodation type within the caravan parks, the sites are privately owned or leased and the emphasis of the masterplan is therefore on the edges of the sites. The existing poor frontages have a negative influence on the image of the country park, the quality of the public 'heart' and the Conservation Area.

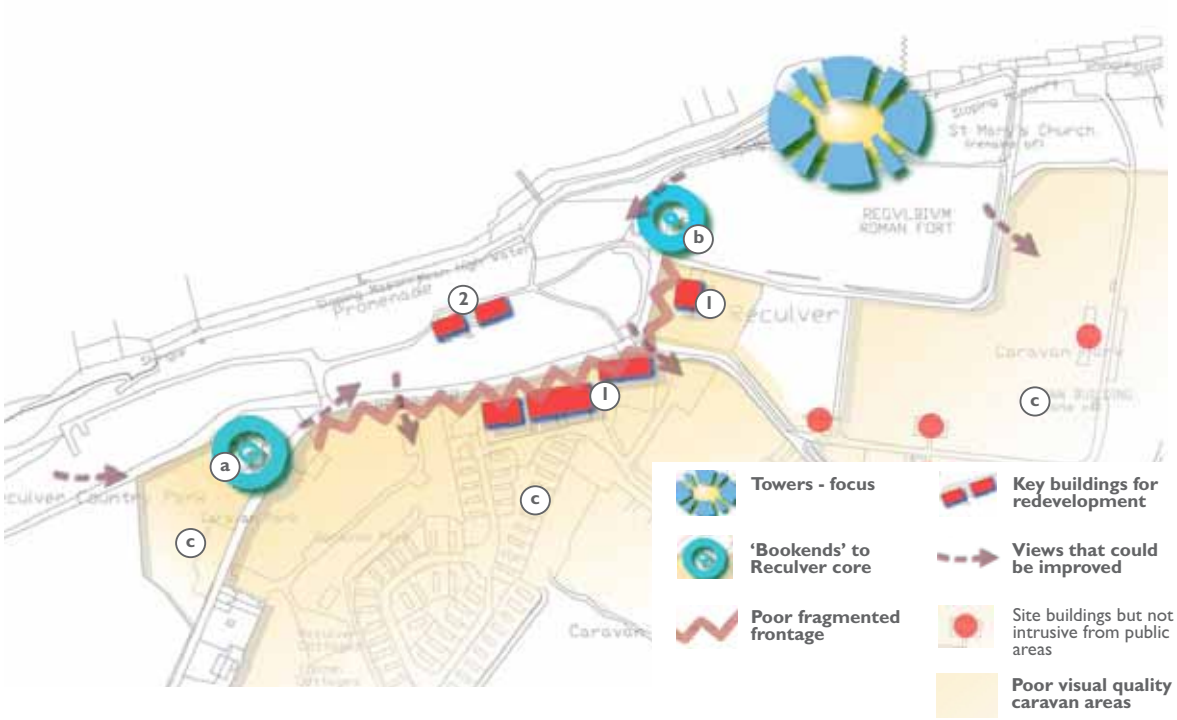
There are two major built improvements that are considered a priority and could deliver the largest contribution to both the built environment as well as the green tourism strategy:

1:The Frontage - the road frontage between the Blue Dolphin and the King Ethelbert pub is the key arrival zone of the country park yet has fragmented boundaries, glimpses into the caravan site yards and a collection of some of the least distinguished and poorest maintained buildings.

- Investigate softer screening of the edges to the caravan parks particularly on the approach opposite the Blue Dolphin.
- Demolish existing amusement arcade, club house and cafe/ shop buildings and replace with alternative facilities / alternative accommodation that reflect the principles of the green-tourism vision and a quality edge to the central 'Green' heart.
- Demolish the flat roof building within the King Ethelbert land and replace with similar (as above) to continue a frontage for the Green.

2: The Visitor Centre - the poor and undistinguished buildings are not obviously a centre and do not portray any sense of image. Funding has been secured and improvements include:

- Adding a distinctive eye-catching extension that reflects the green tourism image as well as providing more facilities for education and recreational use.
- In the longer term provide a new district visitor centre serving potential future West Wantsum and Herne Bay attractions.



Poor frontage buildings and caravans to the Waterways caravan site

Undistinguished and unclear visitor centre

Poor frontage to the King Ethelbert Inn land

Allen Scott Ltd

masterplan vision

The overview objective for the masterplan is:

"To develop Reculver as a high quality strategic hub for green tourism and education"

A series of key principles underpin this objective and are the starting point for the various masterplan project plans set out in Volume 2. The project plans are outline proposals and will need to bear in mind restrictions and directions of existing policy.

The key principles are as follows:

- Provide high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents
- Improve way finding and access, including disabled access where possible
- Optimise existing assets and strengths associated with designations and policies relating to Reculver
- Co-ordinate management of the area bringing together public and private interests
- Establish clear linkages to the surrounding area and the wider regional context
- Change negative perceptions and raise the profile of Reculver.

This section outlines the masterplan vision and its rationale. For clarity certain components are grouped together.

7.1 Overview
7.2 Zone A: Country Park
7.3 Zone B: Reculver Hub
7.4 Zone C: West Wantsum Wetlands
7.5 Zone D: Hinterland
7.6 Programmatic Elements of the Masterplan

7.1 Overview

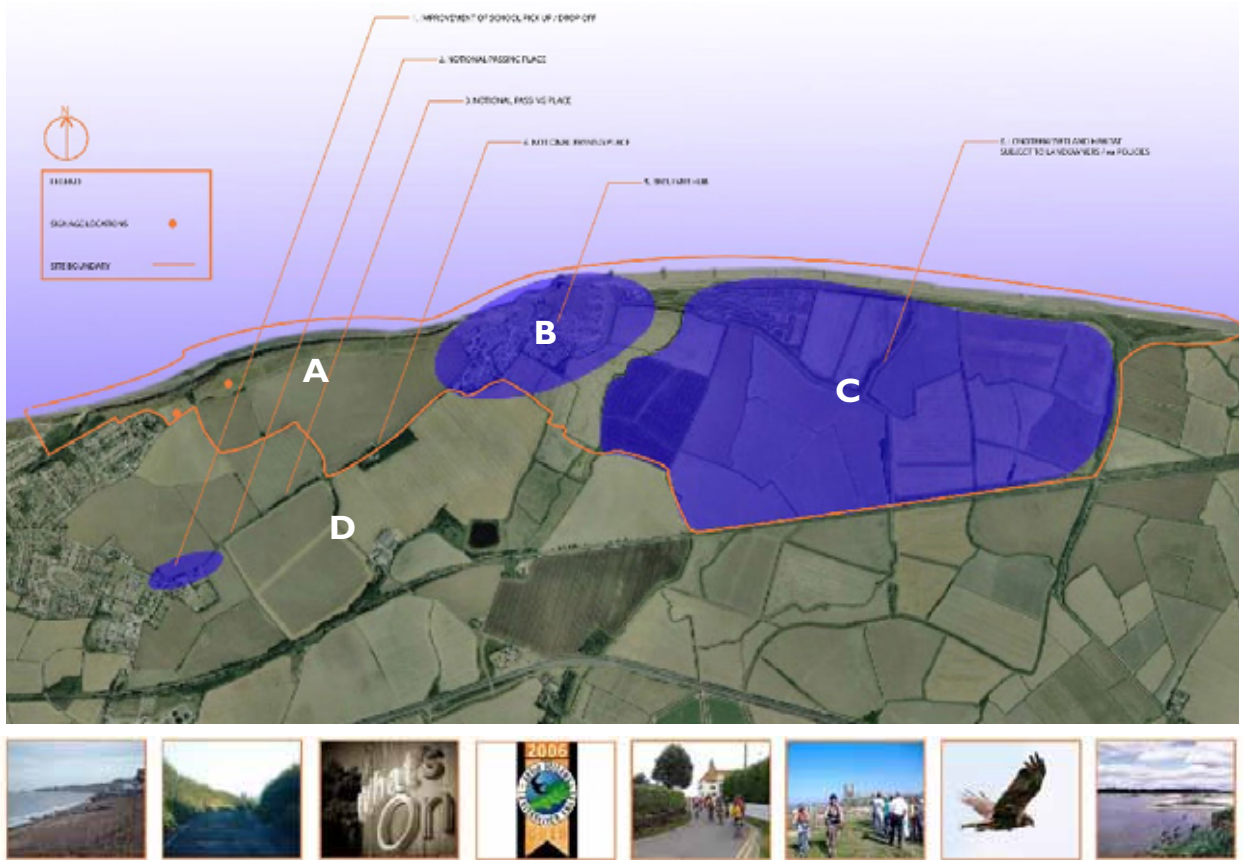
Due to the nature of the issues involved there is not one simple physical concept for the whole site. Therefore, for clarity within the physical masterplan, the area is divided into 4 main zones and given notional titles on the plan opposite:

A - Country Park
(comprising the majority of Reculver Country Park together with adjacent farmland to the south) - there are modest proposals to the existing park relating to the cycle link and improvements to car parks, interpretation and existing facilities. Purchase of farmland to the south might be a key long term element to the future of the linkage to Herne Bay and the survival of the country park itself due to coastal erosion.

B - Reculver Hub
(comprising the main settlement of Reculver accessed from Reculver Lane and incorporates the visitor centre, caravan parks, pub, cafe, arcades, shop, public toilets, houses, car park, Towers and the Oyster Hatchery) - there are numerous proposals in this central area and this forms the core of the deliverable masterplan in the initial phases.

C - West Wantsum
(comprising the algae ponds for the Oyster Hatchery, the sea wall and farmland bounded by the railway line to the south) - the proposals in this area are a major aspiration for the long term future and is identified as the final phase of the masterplan.

D - Hinterland
(comprising the area surrounding Reculver outside of the study boundary) - although proposals are outside of the masterplan scope it is important to highlight the issues that need to be addressed in order to enable the function of elements within the study boundary.



Masterplan Zones

7.2 Zone A - Country Park

Some minor improvements to the country park will greatly help its relevance and relationship to the centre of Reculver and improve links with Herne Bay in delivering connecting leisure opportunities. The new cycle link will allow more people to enjoy the area. A clear and attractive system of signage and provision of information about the park and its attractions is essential and it is proposed to incorporate sculptural elements and strong graphics to increase the impact. Additional locations for these will be beneficial as there are various paths and routes. A sense of progression could be created with word or number trails picking up on relevant local interest rather than trying to 'tell' the whole story on a single board at the entrance to the park.

The two car parks at Bishopstone Lane and Ocean View need to be upgraded in their treatment to give more of a sense of the starting point of a country park and three additional disabled parking spaces will be added near the towers.
A co-ordinated approach to furniture in the park and the picnic areas is proposed together with a logic to their siting and orientation in relation to node points and key vistas. Although full disabled access cannot be realsitically proposed throughout the country park, at the western end due to the natural topography it is suggested that definition of some areas or routes with reinforced grass and handrails would allow greater usage and enjoyment.

Due to the strategy of 'no intervention' of the cliff-line in the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) the current area of the country park will reduce over time. Therefore, in order to maintain the route long term, it may be neccessary to purchase land from the adjacent farm to the south as the cliff erodes. Exactly how quickly this will happen is not known although predictions of erosion lines are identified in the SMP. Within 20-50 years the majority of the existing grassed strip may well be much reduced. This will provide an opportunity to increase the area of sheltered habitat through a series of woodland copses (subject to BAP and habitat advice from KWT and Natural England). Also a satellite car park for Reculver could be provided at the eastern end of this land adjacent to Reculver Lane.

Reculver Country Park

1. Car park
2. Bishopstone Glen
3. Picnic area
4. Private farmland
5. Open grassland
6. Foreshore
7. Steps to beach
8. Area for future extension of country park
9. New woodland copse
10. Satellite car park

Eyecatching interpretation

Sculptural interventions to animate routes

Strong simple graphics

Co-ordination of furniture

7.3 Zone B - Reculver Hub

This central area of the study area clearly has the highest intensity of usage and forms the interface between the country park, the caravan parks, West Wantsum, the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and the visitor facilities.

In order to create a logical and successful centre to Reculver the individual projects will need to relate to each other so that the 'whole' is greater than the sum of the 'parts'.

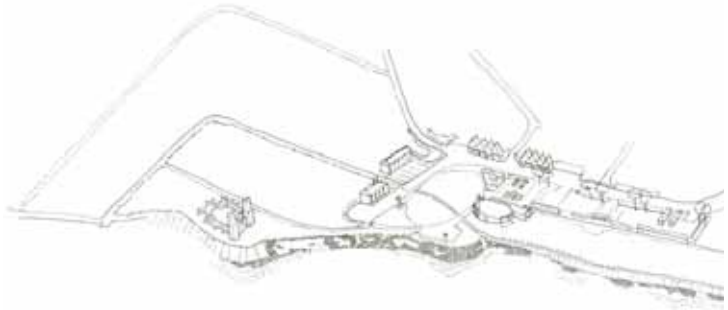
The general concept for all of these projects are underpinned by the following:

- to create a strong landscape setting for the Towers and fort and strengthen its relationship with the country park
- to create a clear sequence for a new visitor arriving at Reculver from approach road, to the car park and then to the range of facilities/attractions at the site
- to minimise the impact of the car park visually while increasing its potential capacity
- to increase the usage of the visitor centre
- to address the poor appearance of the arcades, shop, Reculver Club and cafe
- to make the corner of the road adacent to the cafe safer
- to create a new focus and identity to the centre of Reculver
- to address limitations in accommodation type
- to encourage new business opportunities that are complimentary to the strategic aims of the masterplan
- to create a clearer hierarchy of landscape zones and treatments
- to address the potential safety issues of cars, bicycles, pedestrians and how they interface
- to increase the understanding of, and access to the Towers and fort
- to provide facilities for younger children

All of these aspirations must be achieved while protecting the highly important environmental and historic designated areas. Also the intention is that the proposals enable and encourage complimentary development of the businesses and caravan sites from the private sector. All opportunities to improve sustainability of the site in all its forms as well as integrating biodiversity through considered interventions will be key. (No existing uses are to be forcibly removed - any development at all is subject to application by/on behalf of the landowner).

Reculver Hub

1. Village green
2. Blue Dolphin caravan park
3. Waterways Caravan park
4. Camping and Caravanning Club site
5. King Ethelbert Inn
6. Late Norman towers and roman fort
7. Car park
8. Visitor centre and public toilets
9. Cycle route
10. Oyster hatchery
11. New businesses/accommodation
12. Playground



Reculver Hub Sketch Concept

7.3.1 **Village Green**

The 'village green' already exists to a certain extent but is severely compromised by its edges, the car park and the unnatural landform. However, the new proposal creates a stronger geometry and identity for this space to allow it to become a focus for the buildings and facilities around in a clearer and more direct manner. It also creates a landscaped space in front of the Scheduled Monument rather than a tarmac car park. The space would also have a direct link to the sea through linking with the sea wall structure and raised walkway. Enhancements for ecology will be considered as part of the development: grassland enhancements and connecti.vity will be included where appropriate.

It is intended to be multi-purpose in usage. It should form the focus for events, a stopping point along the walking/cycling routes, a meeting place, a place for orientation before moving to another part of the site, a spill out space from the pub, cafe, playground and visitor centre as well as a general space to relax. It will be open in character and defined by a hierarchy of paths that pick up on main desire lines. It is proposed that a combination of amenity grass, wildflower and speciesrich seed mix recolonise naturaly with occasional tree clusters and bound gravel paths. The cycle link from Herne Bay crosses the centre of the space and ties into the existing Sustrans route to the south of the King Ethelbert Inn. Paths will be wide enough for wheelchairs, and easlly accessible by all. It is not proposed to segregate different users.

By re-working the existing topography into three simple terraces a strong physical and visual linkage between the central space and the buildings around such as the King Ethelbert Inn and the proposed 'frontage' buildings (incorporating a new cafe, shop, holiday accommodation and ideally other new businesses such as cycle hire). It allows the road to be 'softened' and safer for pedestrians and cyclists, as existing visual screens on the corner will be removed.

The proposed 'frontage' buildings would be set back a little from the road line to keep the southern entrance to the King Ethelbert Inn visible from the approach road, without detracting from the 'village green' sense of enclosure.

The pub land to the rear of this frontage is largely developed at present (used for mobile and static homes and for overflow parking.) Redevelopment could have a courtyard character and limited height, meeting the provisions of the Conservation Area requirements and any requirements arising due to the proximaty of the Scheduled Monument (this does not preclude retaining existing use/extending parking provision).

Low key lighting and carefully considered and co-ordinated signage and furniture will keep visual clutter to a minimum while providing safe and useful facilities. There are opportunities for artwork pieces as well as possible kinetic sculptures linked to the sustainable technology from the visitor centre.

The existing Millenium Cross is retained and given a more defined setting. It should be noted that to allow the village green to be developed as shown the existing car park will need to be moved.

Village Green Key Plan

1. Open grassed amenity space
2. Millenium Cross
3. Sea wall raised walkway
4. Cycle link
5. Playground
6. Car park
7. Visitor centre
8. New business/holiday accommodation
9. King Ethelbert Inn

Raised boardwalk for fishing/views/birdwatching

New tree planting similar to existing

View across village green from north

Millenium Cross

Area for informal relaxation

Spill out from cafe and King Ethelbert

Clearly defined generous pathways

Reculver identity and 'brand'

7.3 Reculver Hub (continued)

7.3.2 **Reinforcing Landscape Zones**

There are a wide variety of landscape types in the masterplan study area which provide interest and biodiversity. In order to enhance the experience of the routes through Reculver and to enhance biodiversity (and hence assist in Bio-diversity Action Plan (BAP targets), a clear logic for the interfaces between landscape types should be considered.

The proposed new car park is a large component that needs to be assimilated into the wider area in a more sensitive manner than its predecessor and layering of landscape zones and softened geometries will help this. By extending the vegetated shingle area around the existing visitor centre, a clear separation between the village green and the country park is established and walkers/ cyclists are encouraged to use defined routes through this zone. Also by developing this approach a greater clarity and focus to the village green is given. Creation of a landscape buffer to the north of the Caravanning and Camping Club site is also proposed.

Landscape Zones

Coastal woodland

Natural foreshore

Open grass

Eroding sandstone cliffs

Vegetated shingle

Manmade sea wall

Maintained grass

Saltwater ponds

7.3 Reculver Hub (continued)

7.3.3 **Visitor Centre**

The visitor centre is a central element in the masterplan as it is a public building and will set the agenda for ongoing development. It also is the one project that has funding in place.

The proposed extension is expected to be complete by Easter 2009 and will provide more space for the centre with a new multipurpose room. It is located on the seaward side and links into the existing centre forming a new protected entrance. It will be eyecatching and will soften the effect of the existing building whilst also highlighting the use of sustainable materials and technology. The setting and approach to the centre will be changed to give the impression of a building in the natural landscape. Paths from the new car park will come from the south and enter between the existing buildings to create a sense of drama. The existing walled garden will be removed and the south facing external walls will be screened with planting or re-clad and clear contemporary signage will give a new brand to the centre and state its function.

Framed, uncluttered views of Reculver Towers, Kentish Flats Windfarm and the country park will be achieved in the new extension. The existing degraded mural could also be replaced with a longer term material such as mosaic and an additional one added to the opposite wall to enhance the entrance approach to the centre. The intended phases of development are provided in Volume 2 Project Plan No.7.

A longer term strategic goal will be to provide a totally new build visitor centre and toilets on a new location on the site - ideally nearer the sea and the village green or possibly linking to the West Wantsum wetlands. The existing centre could then be developed for other usages such as a field studies or education centre.

It is essential that the maximum impact is made with this development on the centre of Reculver and that aspiration is kept high. Much can be done at limited cost to improve the setting and perception of the building and will form a catalyst to the overall masterplan.

Visitor Centre

1. Existing visitor centre
2. Proposed extension
3. Existing toilets
4. Playground
5. Car park
6. Coach parking

View from Reculver Towers

View from country park

Approach from car park

Clear brand and eyecatching building

Stronger heritage interpretation

Planted screens to improve facade

Sustainable materials and soft forms

Framed views for maximum impact

Fun and inspiring to visit

7.3.4 **Late Norman Towers and Roman Fort**

The main proposals for this element are based around the desire to increase access and interpretation of the historic monument. A variety of methods are proposed. Some will be permanent while others could be temporary as an event or an arts installation over a season.

Developing the experience and accessibility of going up the Towers is a key project. Even though the Towers are not particularly high, the process of climbing up and seeing the views of the rest of the site and beyond is a specific draw to visitors. Interpretation within the Towers themselves, and opening up new views by changing some of the acrylic window panels will greatly improve the experience. Some simple safety modifications will also possibly allow a lower intensity of staffing which currently restricts opening to once a year.

More explanation of the actual site, it's links with Canterbury and what lies beneath/out to sea will again be a key draw to visitors. Identification of the fort layout could be formed on the ground through non-invasive landscape treatment and/or more exposure of the Roman buildings. Reconstruction images from key viewpoints could also link the remains to the original geography of the area. Further information should also be provided on the cycle route around the Roman wall at the perimeter.

By improvements in security and management there may be opportunities to bring some original objects such as the Reculver Columns back to the site from museums and/or Canterbury Cathedral. Clearly the development of the visitor centre will help with this and interpretation strategy should be co-ordinated and linked.

One possible artwork installation could be placing a series of markers out at sea that identify the original extent of the fort. This could be formed in many different ways and an ideas competition could raise further awareness of the site. Similar ideas have been explored at Dunwich, a submerged village in Suffolk through the 'Waterlog' project.

Opportunities:

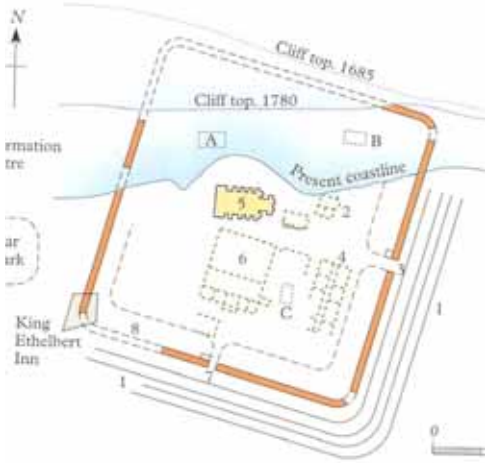
- Enhance the importance of the East and South Gates and remove vegetation from the fort wall
- Re-excavate the unique corn-drying oven
- Excavate short lengths of the defensive ditches close to the corn drying oven
- Create an exhibition for archeological finds and information

Opportunities: (continued)

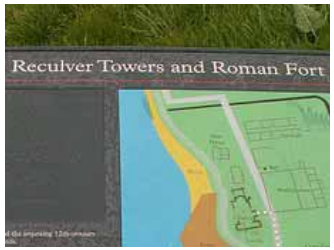
- Re-excavate the unique corn-drying oven
- Excavate short lengths of the defensive ditches close to the corn drying oven
- Create an exhibition for archeological finds and information

1. Saxon Towers and church
2. King Ethelbert Inn
3. Roman wall
4. Artwork markers
5. Interpretation of remains

Roman Fort and Late Norman Towers



Interpretation project for full extent of fort



Increased signage and Information

Columns insitu

Markers

Relics in visitor centre

More access to Towers and interpretation insitu

New structures to aid safe access

Re-enactment events

Clearer identification of original layout - Richborough Castle

7.3 Reculver Hub (continued)

7.3.5 **Car Park and Roadway**

To allow the creation of the village green outlined in the earlier section and to improve the setting of Reculver Towers from the country park, it is proposed to relocate the central car park. The new location will be between the visitor centre and Reculver Lane and will link to the existing coach park. The capacity of the main car park will be only slightly larger than the existing but greater managed use of the coach/overspill area will help to provide a more flexible arrangement. The existing facility of overflow on the grassland to the west will be maintained.
Three additional disabled parking spaces will be included near the towers that should be of real benefit to the disabled.

Great care in detail design will be required to create a landscaped car park that does not visually intrude on the country park and breaks up the impression of a large parking area from Reculver Lane. Varied surface treatments are proposed. The coach/overspill is likely to get lower usage than the main car park and so a 'green' treatment is suggested such as grasscrete or reinforced turf. The main parking area however will have high usage throughout the year and so a bound gravel on tarmacadam is seen to be more appropriate.

The parking layout has been designed to give a soft geometry while keeping a high efficiency within the site constraints. Hedge, tree and shrub planting will be carefully designed to break up the parking bays while retaining key view across the car park to the Towers, visitor centre and country park. A curving pathway along the northern edge of the car park links the country park to the village green and is situated to the south of the visitor centre. On this route will be a cyclists meeting point and general welcome/information and interpretation panels.

To allow a managed flexibility there are three access points from Reculver Lane. The coach park has an entry and exit point to avoid the need for coaches to turn around or reverse. The main car park has a single entry/exit point. A gated link between the two allows the overflow facility to be managed. Detailed feasibility work on levels and vehicle tracking will be required to 'firm up' the proposals. Also a review of parking charges is proposed to encourage visitors to stay longer without reducing income.

A longer term strategy is to provide an additional satellite car park outside the central area. Usage of this by cyclists/walkers would be encouraged. It is also proposed to provide three disabled parking bays at the end of Reculver Lane nearest to the Towers.

In order to enhance the character of the village green, the eastern end of Reculver Lane is to be resurfaced with a bound gravel system. This will highlight the linkage between the public facilities such as cafe shops etc to the village green. The change in treatment is also intended to have a traffic calming effect and to suggest a pedestrian priority in this area.

Parking associated with new frontage development is proposed to be behind the buildings in landscaped courts.

Main car park and overspill/coach park

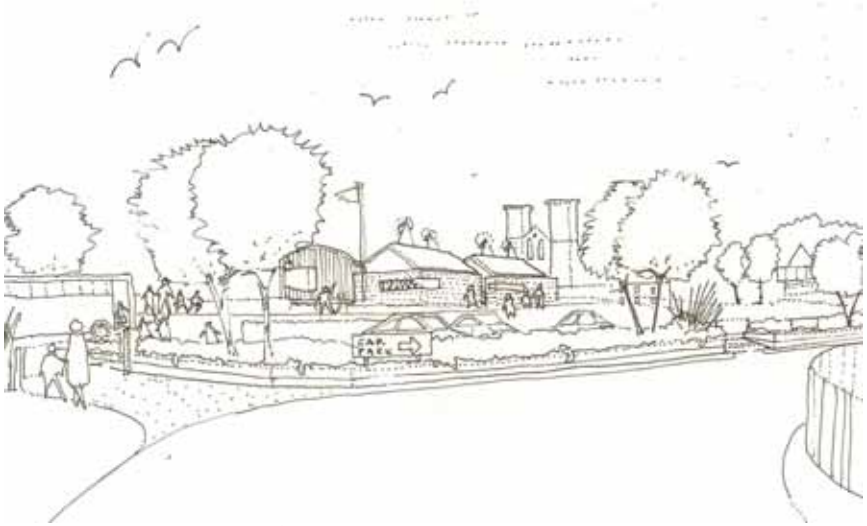
1. Coach parking/managed overspill
2. Events overspill
3. Main car park
4. Coach park entry/events entry/exit
5. Coach park exit
6. Main car park entry/exit
7. Cyclists/groups meeting point
8. Visitor centre/toilets
9. Cycle route
10. Village green

Satellite car park location

1. Main car park
2. Satellite car park

Bound gravel to main car park

'Greened' treatment to coach/overspill parking



Approach to landscaped car park from Reculver Lane

7.3.6 **Caravanning and Camping Club Site**

As for the visitor centre, the Caravanning and Camping Club site will be a catalyst for the regeneration of Reculver and a critical opportunity. It is the only one of the sites at Reculver that has a direct relationship with the historic towers as well as sea views. As such it has a higher profile with outside visitors and has the potential to attract more visitors. The current Caravanning and Camping Club proposals replace existing static caravans only on the eastern and southern edges. The area adjacent to the Scheduled Monument is more transitory for tents and touring caravan pitches.

The higher visibility of the site and the reputation of the Caravan and Camping Club opens up the opportunity for experimental accommodation types such as fixed camping 'pods'. Alternatively examples of classic caravan types and/or future caravan design prototypes could be showcased to draw on the long history of caravanning at Reculver. Either way the designs would need to be in-keeping but aspirational and the optimum site for them will be at the north, as a buffer between the 'standard' caravans and the public routes.

Treatment of the north and western edges should also be carefully designed. Retention of existing vegetation will be advantageous if acceptable to English Heritage. Excavation of one of the Roman ditches will give a greater separation from the Environment Agency Road/cycle route and open up a further avenue of historic interpretation. The area between the site fence and the sea wall needs a positive treament while retaining the access point. A zone of vegetated shingle will soften the appearance and give a clearer definition of the pedestrian/ cycle route and greater privacy to the camp site.

Caravanning and Camping Club Site

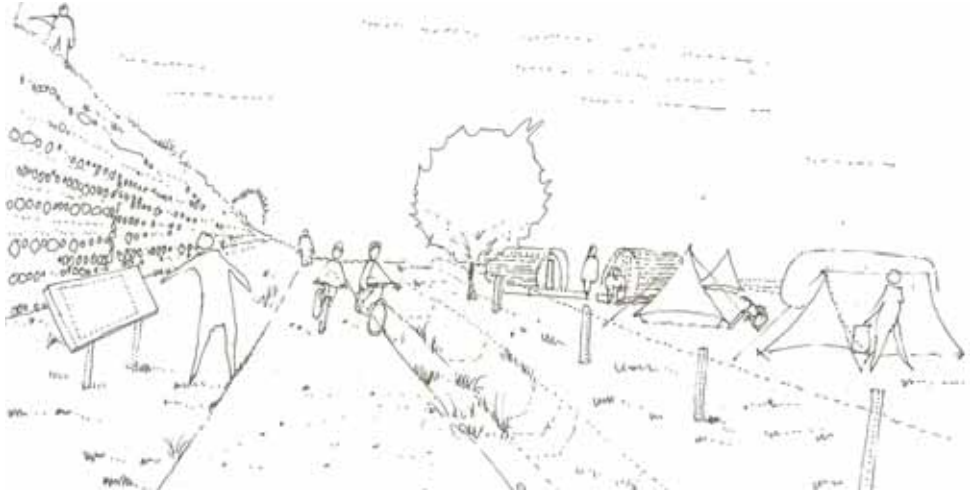
1. Touring pitches
2. Experimental 'green' accommodation
3. Vegetated shingle buffer zone
4. Excavated Roman ditch
5. Static caravans
6. Roman Wall

Tents/mobile caravans will bring in new visitors

New sustainable accommodation types

Caravan of the Future?

Eskdale camping 'pods'



View to north adjacent Roman wall

Vegetated shingle zone to north

Classic design caravans

7.3 Reculver Hub (continued)

7.3.7 **Playground**

This will be a new visitor facility at Reculver and has the potential to enhance the experience greatly for children. If designed innovatively and linked in with the work of the visitor centre then the play element can be used to explain or touch on other themes of the site such as sustainability, environment, wildlife and history. It will be a missed opportunity if a standard toddlers playground were installed. However, it is also important to make the play areas fun and attractive to children yet robust enough to cope with the demands of the coastal location and possible abuse by older children.

Some of the initial ideas/themes are as follows:

Kinetic Sculptures: use of moving sculptures that use renewable energy technology or simply interact with wind or rain.

Roman or Saxon themes for equipment or a reconstruction of a Roman Fort

Wildlife

Bouncing Bomb/aircraft

Coastal/marine

Elements of the playground for the youngest children will require a boundary enclosure. Design of this and the materials used for surfaces and equipment should be complementary to the other elements of the site

Play Area

1. Play area
2. Visitor centre
3. Car park
4. Cafe
5. Village green
6. Toilets

Wildlife themes

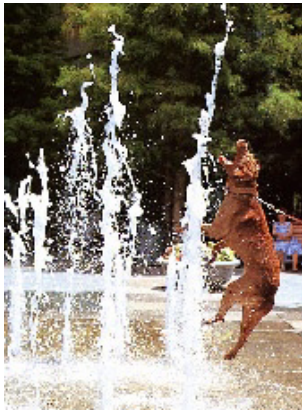
Reculver history themes

Coastal marine themes

.....while keeping the fun element

Kinetic sculptures - sun

Kinetic sculptures - wind



Kinetic sculptures - water

7.3.8 **Cycle Route and Facilities**

The development of Reculver as a strategic cycling hub is central to the masterplan and in line with the proposed culture trail cycle route from Whitstable to Margate using the Viking Coastal trail, and a new path along the Wantsum Walk and Saxon Shoreway via Marshside and St. Nicholas at Wade. Some funding is already in place from Sustrans. Proposals to connect the coastline from Herne Bay to Minnis Bay via Reculver with links to Herne Bay and Swalecliffe are approved and underway so the 'gap' in the wider network is filled. In order to successfully operate for cyclists, certain facilities are desirable and the cycle route itself will need to be carefully co-ordinated with the other developments at Reculver.

Firstly, clear arrival points must be established at the east and west for those on a through route. These will provide information and a welcome to cyclists and advise of the facilities for them at Reculver. On the eastern side this will be shared with walkers while on the western side this is on the promenade. Opportunities also exist at these points for interpretation of the Roman wall, the Towers and the country park. The car park is also a key meeting point for cyclists arriving by car and a clear safe area will be designated for this purpose. A longer term aspiration will be the provision of a satellite car park outside the central area of Reculver (see 6.3) for busier summer periods.

The route will be clearly defined with signage and road markings tying in linkages to the national route and local circular routes. At the village green there will be a potential pedestrian/cyclist/vehicle conflict and so clear priority will be essential. Wide paths and clear vision will also help to reduce any risks. A degree of management and policing may be required as well as building relationships with groups such as SPOKES and local cycling clubs.

Cycle racks at key places will be provided, ideally with a theme particular to Reculver as opposed to a standard urban type. The development of cycle related businesses such as repair or sale of bikes will be a useful addition, although some degree of subsidy may be required to establish this. The provision of cycle hire/storage at Reculver for local residents and holiday makers staying at Reculver should be considered in coordination with cycle hire for day visitors to/from Herne Bay using a Herne Bay facility. Similarly events and equipment for disabled cyclists should be evaluated and provided.

New routes and improvements to the cycle network should be promoted through links with Explore Kent and Sustrans and in consultation with NEK initiative and Kent County Council.

It should be noted that if there is a managed retreat of the shoreline to the east, as a result of implementation of the present Mid-long term polices of the Shoreline Management Plan, the cycle link from Birchington will be lost and should be relocated. This will require joined up working with Thanet to keep the Viking Coastal Trail.

Cycle route and facilities in central Reculver

cycle route

1. Cycle hire/sale/repair
2. Arrival/information point
3. Satellite car park
4. Central car park/meeting point
5. Visitor centre/toilets
6. Refreshment outlets

Cycle furniture with local theme

Approach from east - Viking Coastal Path

Interpretation at key points - Roman Wall

Meeting point for groups at edge of new car park

Clearly defined and safe route

Linkage to country park and Herne Bay

7.3.9 **Frontage Development**

New development around the south and eastern fringes of the proposed village green is a key element in changing the perception of Reculver to visitors and regenerating the centre. The existing buildings are uninviting and run down and must have an effect on the potential viability of the businesses themselves. The King Ethelbert Inn is the only exception, having been recently refurbished and providing a good quality visitor experience.

The masterplan encourages existing businesses and operators to improve and upgrade existing facilities and amenities both internally and externally.

The masterplan concept is to propose new buildings that have businesses and/or parking at ground level with holiday or bed and breakfast accommodation above. The designs must be high quality and work with the sustainable green tourism strategy. Apart from replacing the cafe and shop it is felt that new businesses could be encouraged such as bike rental/repair, outdoors clothing and fishing equipment. There could be a catalyst effect where further businesses could be attracted (specialist restaurant, art gallery, souvenirs) so that flexibility in the design of the new buildings could be an advantage. Clearly it would require a major investment from the private sector to make this happen and the proposals assume that the Reculver Club, arcades, shop and cafe are removed/remodelled. Also detailed design issues relating to the main entrance to Waterways and amendments to other buildings would need to be explored in more detail at the earliest stage.

One of the key planning constraints for any type of holiday accommodation will be the predicted flood levels. However, further study has been commissioned by Canterbury City Council and detailed flood mapping can be found in Flood Risk Assessment Reculver (Herrington Consulting Ltd March 2008) which concludes that the proposals are viable, (see also Para 3.7 and Section 8.0).

It is felt that 2-3 storey buildings would be more suitable than the existing single storey in order to address possible flood issues and to create enough 'presence' around the village green. Allowing the shop(s) and cafe etc to spill out will make them more visually obvious and open decks and balconies above would provide further animation. A limited palette of materials and forms would be preferable to provide a co-ordinated style to the frontage with some expression of colour for the businesses to bring a sense of coastal leisure.

Land to the rear of the King Ethelbert Inn could potentially be developed in accordance with Conservation Area requirements and any requirements arising due to the proximity of the Ancient Schedulem Monument.

Reculver's unique historic character and position as a country park beside the coast, should be valued and acknowledged with a sensitive approach to development that does not simply replicate the character of existing local tourism areas.

The final extent of the frontage buildings will be led by the economic viability and market size. From an urban design point of view there is little reason why the terrace of buildings should not extend all the way to the Blue Dolphin. However, the key area to encourage would be the area of the existing shop/cafe/arcades and pub store as these have a negative effect on the character of Reculver at present and will help to reinforce the village green.

Frontage development

1. Village green
2. Playground
3. Parking area
4. Traffic calm surface
5. New building
6. Main entry to Waterways

Lively cafe

Outdoor seating

Bike repair/advice

Bike rental/sale

Flood issues - beach houses USA

Sustainable - apartments, Camber

References to the suggested character of the development are not prescriptive and will be subject to usual planning considerations including consideration of conservation area and local Scheduled Monument designations.

Street level businesses with holiday accommodation above

7.4 - Zone C West Wantsum Wetlands

The area east of central Reculver is subject to a review by the Environment Agency regarding on-going flood defence. There are two levels of proposals for this area. The second level may or may not proceed as part of the masterplan depending on the outcome of the review (see Section 8.0).

Part of the Masterplan Phase 2 consists of a series of interventions in the existing landscape to improve bird habitat and promote bird-watching. This involves improving access through better maintenance of existing pathways and the creation of new walkways and hides. As for other parts of Reculver an increased level of interpretation on key routes is to be provided with information on the oyster hatchery and bird watching on the sea wall.

Masterplan Phase 4 would be a much larger scale development of a saltwater marshland habitat enabled by a strategic change in the location of sea defences. This will take many years to develop, contribute greatly to achieving Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets and involve the Kent Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, Natural England, the Internal Drainage Board. Any development will be subject to the amendments of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP). Any loss of the cycling link from Birchington would need to be relocated. This would require joined up working with Thanet District Council to re-route the Viking Coastal Trail.

The principle is to use a process of managed retreat to significantly widen existing rivers and ditches over the low lying land and using the fill to make bunds and areas of higher ground to create a rich mosaic of habitats to attract a wide range of birds especially waders and other wetland birds with a network of hidden paths allowing peripheral access to all habitats.

The proposal shows a network of raised paths, based largely on existing routes, and interlinked areas of open water including:

- Woodland - on the west edge to create natural networks with the existing hedgerows and trees and to screen the caravan parks;
- Scrub - managed willow scrubland for dense bird habitat;
- Reedbeds - allowing some areas of water to be colonised for wetland species habitat; and,
- Saltmarsh - additional mud flats and tidal zone to attract waders.

The long term aim is for the West Wantsum Wetlands to be a nationally recognised bird reserve attracting more visitors to the area as well as supporting educational objectives.

Map extract of the adopted Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)

New walkways

Curlew at Reculver
(Flikr website)

Attraction of new visitors

Hide structures

Saltwater marsh habitat

Development of green tourism strategy

7.5 - Zone D Hinterland

Although the masterplan study area is set by the R13 policy area from the Local Plan, there are certain projects that need to go beyond this particular boundary.

On a basic access level, improvements to the road to Reculver (possibly funded through S106 contribution associated with new development) would assist flow of traffic. The creation of passing places would allow two larger vehicles to get past each other. With the likely increase in traffic generated by the proposed touring pitches as well as general development of the site as a strategic hub, carrying out a more detailed transport study would be appropriate. This could tie into other elements of public transport/green travel plans in other areas.
Any foundings from Kent Highways Services (KHS) is likely to be focused on maintenance of the existing route, poor conditions of whichis liikely to be exacerbated by any increase in traffic.

The other traffic problem at Reculver School currently impacts on movements to and from Reculver at certain times of the day during termtime. The School has already tried moving certain proposals forward and it is expected that the proposed Reculver Co-ordinator would continue to assist/monitor to help resolve this issue.

The masterplan should be read in conjunction with KCC's Countryside Access Improvement plan (CAIP).

The continuation of the development of the cycle and walking network with links to other established routes and their long term maintenance (through consultations with KCC) is key to the establishment of Reculver as a hub. Further circular routes from Reculver would offer the visitor more choice and a different perspective on the area.

Support is given for any development and improvements to the regional routes of importance and key assets of the Masterplan area, including the Saxon Shore Way, National Cycle Track 1 and Viking Coastal Trail, where they can be integrated with proposed developments in the Masterplan (including resistance to the closure of the missing section of the Viking Coastal Trail).

Establishing and reinforcing links with other destinations in the region will further enhance the general aims of the masterplan. Some synergies already exist while others need to be developed through the proposed Reculver Co-ordinator or through shared projects, events or marketing material.

NEK Stategic Vision

Develop cultural links with Thanet

Historic synergy with Richborough Castle

Tourist and cycle links with Herne Bay

Strategy to resolve traffic problems at Reculver School

Creation of passing places on Reculver Lane

Development of further circular walks/cycle rides from Reculver

Green toursim/education links to Blean

7.6 - Programmatic Elements of Masterplan

To enable Reculver to become the high quality green tourism and education hub envisaged by the masterplan, it will be necessary to support the physical developments at the site with well co-ordinated management and a strong partnership between the public and private sector stakeholders.

Changing the perception of Reculver and putting it on the map, as a destination to be visited, will be essential if green tourism is to deliver the necessary visitors to regenerate Reculver's businesses.

A Reculver website will be a core element of the country park's promotional strategy, together with the creation of a strong brand that works for all of Reculver's stakeholders and will be included in all interpretation and education projects across the country park. Circular walking and cycling routes starting from Reculver, links with the wider regional and national cycle and public transport networks will be promoted, together with the facilities that are available for visitors.

The upgraded visitor centre and infrastructure at the country park will need to be complemented by private sector opportunities to develop high quality short-term visitor accommodation at Reculver.

The existing caravan parks need to be quality assessed and promoted by the regional tourist boards. To support the high quality, sustainable vision of the country park, accommodation providers will need to welcome walkers and cyclists and join accreditation schemes such as Green Tourism Business Scheme and the David Bellamy Conservation Awards.

Reculver Co-ordinator
It is proposed that a 'Reculver Co-ordinator' is employed with the objective of driving the delivery of the Masterplan projects and co-ordinating the interests of all stakeholders.

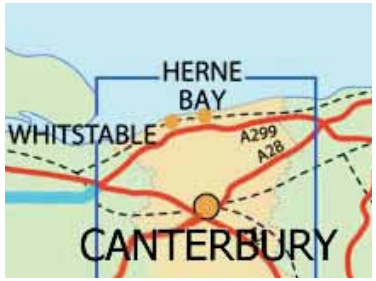
The key aims of the co-ordinator would be to:

- Drive the delivery of the masterplan
- Co-ordinate the management of partners and stakeholders
- Deliver the regeneration of Reculver
- Establish regional links

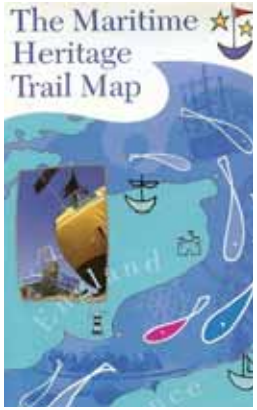
Their priority would be to develop the country park as a quality destination for green tourism, including the development of high quality and sustainable accommodation provision. The Co-ordinator position is explored further in Volume 2.0 Project Plan No.1.

Brand and perception of reculver

Interpretation opportunities - new media, artworks, strategic linkages, events, co-ordinated approach



Putting Reculver on the map



implementation strategy

The masterplan has been structured as a series of different projects. Some of these projects are inter-linked with others while some are 'stand-alone'. The advantage of this approach is flexibility of implementation when funding becomes available. Therefore, to underpin this, a flexible strategy relating to programme and budget must also be established particularly as private investment will be required for some aspects of the masterplan. Therefore it is difficult to directly control the entire process and the appointment of the proposed Reculver Co-ordinator is seen as a key element in progressing implementation and liasion with the private sector.

Clearly the masterplan is only the starting point for the overall implementation. Many of the physical projects set out in Volume 2 are not detailed proposals and will require feasibility studies, Site Specific Flood Risk Assessments as well as design work and surveys that are beyond the scope of this Masterplan, as well as bearing in mind restrictions and directions of existing policy. Any project that could have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European or Ramsar Site, alone, or in combination with other plans or projects, would also not be considered to be in accordance with the aims and objectives of this master plan.

In the individual project plans a statement on anticipated implementation issues has been included to assist those driving regeneration forward.

8.1 Crtical Paths, Priorities and Phasing
8.2 Southern Water
8.3 Natural England
8.4 Enabling Processes/Strategic Reviews
8.5 Overview Programme
8.6 Funding Overview

8.1 Critical Paths, Priorities and Phasing

There are a series of different critical paths for the implementation of a masterplan of this nature. Certain projects are high priority to form a catalyst for later schemes. Also some projects have already been allocated funding and so can be implemented in the short term. The diagram opposite sets out a framework for general phasing.

Phase 1 consists of initial projects that can act as a catalyst to the whole masterplan. The cycle link and visitor centre are completed or underway and the Camping and Caravanning Club is expected to progress improvements to their site. These projects are being successfully delivered and will raise the general aspiration for Reculver.

The appointment of the Reculver Co-ordinator and/or support from a range of other Council officers will be important to the progress of Phase 2 with the re-located car park and village green considered key projects. These and the other Phase 2 projects will offer real regeneration benefits to Reculver and would be subject to reasonably substantial private and public investment. When the majority of these projects are delivered the main aims of the masterplan and strategic objectives will have been met.

Phase 3 is intended to secure the future of the country park and link to Herne Bay but would require substantial purchase of private land.

Phase 4 involves longer term aspirations of creating a major wetland habitat and is closely related to future decisions on shoreline management policy. If the decision is taken to develop in this way there would be opportunities to increase the green tourism/education facilities to cater for enlarged number of visitors. At that stage a major review of travel issues would be required.

There are clear linkages between different projects and these need to be monitored and managed to avoid possibility of abortive works. Temporary solutions may be required for interim periods between certain projects to enable the place to operate. For example, the village green cannot be developed without moving the car park and final signage scheme cannot be developed until it is clear what all the facilities at Reculver will be. Also, if it was found that certain elements were not achievable then a review of the masterplan would be required and a revised approach developed. The proposed Reculver Co-ordinator would need to monitor the development of projects and manage the interface with private investors to avoid divergence of ideas and lack of integration.

The masterplan does set out a certain level of development guidelines without being overly prescriptive and will become a material consideration for planning applications. More detailed development briefs may be useful for projects such as the 'frontage buildings' but would require further feasibility work on flood risk to be available.

Phasing Strategy

Timing	Project	Critical Path Factors	Funding	Notes
PHASE 1 (1-2 years)	Herne Bay Cycle Link	planning permission/co-ordination with masterplan	public - allocated	
	Reculver Co-ordinator	funding/recruitment	public - required	
	Reculver Partnership	co-ordinator in place	public - required	
	Website phase 1	co-ordinator in place		
	Extension to Visitor Centre	planning permission/co-ordination with masterplan	public - allocated	
	Caravanning and Camping Club	planning permission/co-ordination with masterplan	private investment	
	Events Programme	co-ordinator in place	public - required	
	Private investment strategy	co-ordinator in place		
	Public Funding Application	co-ordinator in place		
PHASE 2 (3-5 years)	Car Park/Roadway	funding/planning permission	public - required	
	Village Green	funding/planning permission	public - required	
	Playground	funding/planning permission	public - required	
	Country Park Facilities	NE approval/funding/planning permission	public - required	
	Frontage Development	flood risk/business plan/planning permission	private investment	
	Reculver Lane Paving Plaza	KCC highways approval/funding	public - required	
	West Wantsum - birdwatching improvements	funding/planning permission	public - required	
	Towers/Scheduled Ancient Monument	EH approval/funding/concerns	public - required	
	Interpretation Strategy	co-ordinated energy/funding	public - required	could be commissioned in phase 1
	Leaflet/Website phase 2	co-ordinated energy/funding	public - required	
	brand identity	co-ordinated energy/funding	public - required	
	country break theory	co-ordinated energy/funding	public - required	
	General Environmental Improvements	utilities approval/funding/planning permission	public - required	
	Satellite car park	land acquisition/funding/planning permission	public - required	
	Reculver School Transport Issues	outside of masterplan scope	not known	
PHASE 3 (5-15 years)	Extending Country Park to south	land acquisition/funding/planning permission	public - required	timing dependent on rate of cliff erosion
PHASE 4 (15-25 years)	West Wantsum Wetlands	EA review/land acquisition/funding/planning permission	public - required	
	New Visitor Centre	business case/funding/planning permission	public - required	could be brought into Phase 3 if feasible

8.2 Southern Water

Southern Water owns and operates the waste water pumping station within the Reculver Caravan Park.

Residential and other sensitive development should be no closer than 15 metres to the station's boundary to preserve amenity from potential noise and odour effects and to ensure future access to the site.
Initial investigations show that there is capacity in the existing waste water pumping station to accommodate the scale of development proposed.

Southern Water have identified that there are no surface water sewers within the masterplan area. Therefore, it is important that surface water should not be permitted to discharge to the foul sewer. Surface water can inundate the public sewerage system thereby exceeding its capacity. The extra pressure can cause flows from the main sewer to surcharge up tributary sewers. As a result, properties may become flooded by foul sewage, even relatively remote from the flooded site.

Existing infrastructure may cross a proposed development site (sewers and pumping mains). Development design must ensure that any infrastructure crossing the development site is not built over. Where sewers cross the site an easement of width between 6 and 13 metres, depending on pipe size and depth, will be required. This should be clear of all proposed buildings and substantial tree planting.

On sites where the layout is severely constrained due to sewers crossing the site, diversion of the sewers may be possible. However, this would be at the developer's expense and is subject to a feasible alternative route being available. Some sewers are of a particularly large size and would be difficult to divert.

8.3 Natural England

Natural England is a statutory consultee and has commented on the proposed masterplan. They support the conditions of the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) that the masterplan is not likely to have significant effects on the European Sites, and that the level of detail of the Masterplan, is generally appropriate. However, Natural England should be consulted further in regard to detail development and enhancement proposals.

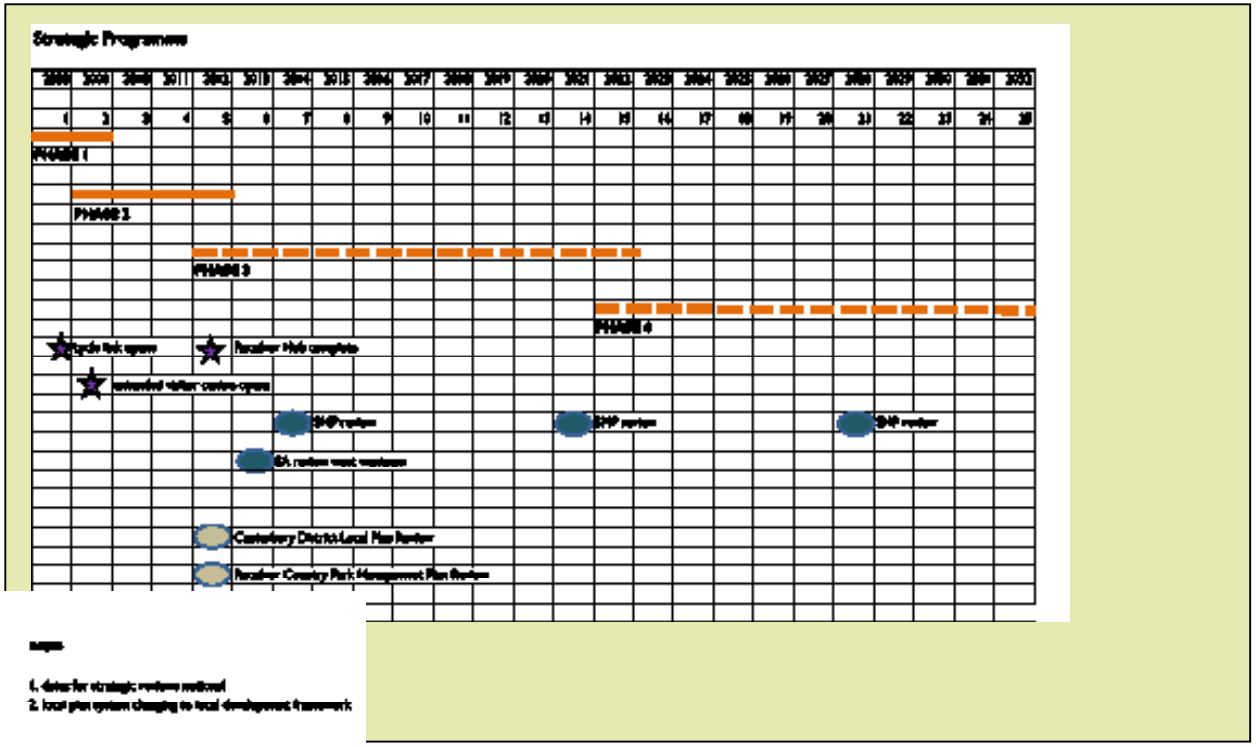
8.4 Enabling Processes/Strategic Reviews

Many of the strategic policies will clearly be periodically reviewed. However it is not anticipated that there will be a major divergence from the general thrust of developing green tourism in this area.

The two main reviews below that fundamentally affect the masterplan are those related to flood risk levels and the longer term shoreline management of the West Wantsum area.

1. The Canterbury City Council commissioned '**Flood Risk Assessment for Reculver' (Herrington Consulting Ltd, March 2008), has laid the groundwork for the acceptance, subject to detailed design and discussions, for** new holiday accommodation proposals.
2. The Shoreline Management Plan has confirmed a long term strategy of 'managed realignment' that establishes the long term potential for flooding in West Wantsum.

Environment Agency Review of West Wantsum Area: This is a critical determinant for the future land usage in the West Wantsum Area. The Shoreline Management Plan highlights that for 1-20 years the existing sea defence will be maintained but after that time there may be a realignment. It is not believed that this work will take place for at least the next five years and ongoing monitoring relating to options/costs etc are likely to happen for a further 10 years. It should be noted that the Shoreline Management Plan itself will be reviewed every 7 years.



8.5 Overview Programme

A strategic programme is set out below, identifying the four phases over a period of 25 years. Funding is clearly a major determinant for the programme for Phase 2 while the flood policies will be critical for Phase 4.

More detailed programmes for individual projects and their critical linkages are set out in Volume 2. These should be monitored and updated on a regular basis by the proposed Reculver Co-ordinator.

8.6 Funding Overview

The proposed route for the public sector projects, without allocated funds, is to explore a series of bids to different funds as and when opportunities arise. These may or may not be in conjunction with other partners and prioritisation will be based on the objectives of this masterplan as well as on the emphasis of the funds available. For example, European funds, such as 'Interreg IV', were favourable to capital projects but now have an emphasis on revenue projects - so whilst funding for the car park is not likely it is possible that the Reculver Co-ordinator role may be eligible.

Investment by the Camping and Caravanning Club in improvements to the site may also be used as potential match funding as part of a capital bid.

Private sector investment on relevant projects will clearly be dependent on market stability and a robust business plan. Initial budgets are indicated in Volume 2 Project Plans.

consultation and workshop

Consultation in many forms has been central to the development of the Reculver Masterplan. Previous work by Canterbury City Council, such as visitor surveys to the Country Park, have been taken into account. A series of informal and formal consultations have taken place with individuals and/or groups with an interest in the site. The process has been iterative to underpin the importance of creating a masterplan that all the stakeholders can 'buy into' and truly inform the proposals. Therefore early discussions with individuals helped shape the initial options and then at a suitable juncture a workshop session was held, bringing all the key people together as a group. Once the preferred direction was established, further presentations/meetings were held with various authorities and council officers who would input into implementation and legislation on a strategic as well as detailed level.

The document in its complete form will also be offered for a wider public consultation process via Canterbury City Council's website.

The following provides a record of consultees and key meetings held, together with some of the key generic points raised. Clearly not every idea has not been incorporated. However, the reasoning why some items have not been carried forward are given to help conclude the process.

Schedule 1: Prior Consultations relevant to Masterplan Project

Canterbury District Visitor Survey, July 2004 (Herne Bay Analysis)

Schedule 2: Consultation Meetings:

Meriel Mortimer/Priscilla Mumby	Environment Agency
Judith Roebuck	English Heritage
Anne Partington-Omar/Chas Matthews	Kent Wildlife Trust
Paul Hadaway	Natural East Kent
Mick Oliver/Ingrid Chudleigh	Natural England
Mark Wing/George Wing	King Ethelbert Inn
Spencer Pashley/Roland Whately-Bates	Waterways Caravan Park
Roger Adams	Camping and Caravanning Club
Simon Grier	Blue Dolphin Park
Lawrence and Karen Sayer	Owners of cafe, shop and arcades
John Bayes/Elaine Kirkaldie	Seasalter Shellfish

Schedule 3: Telephone Consultations

Brian Philps	Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit
Steve McFarland	SMP, Canterbury City Council
Karen Richardson	English Heritage
Richard Cross	Archaeologist, CCC
Jill Bugess	Head, Reculver Primary School
Carol Porter	Herne Bay Tourist Info Centre
Cheryl Parker	Coastal Kent Manager
Keith McKenny	KCC
Val Hyland	KCC Regeneration and Economy
Paul Marshall	Environment Agency Operations
Pete Dowling	Internal Drainage Board

Schedule 4: Stakeholder Workshop Attendees:

Philippa Sims	English Heritage
Gili Armson/Chas Matthews	Kent Wildlife Trust
Mark Wing/George Wing	King Ethelbert Inn
Spencer Pashley	Waterways Caravan Park
Simon Grier	Blue Dolphin Park
Lawrence and Karen Sayer	Owners of cafe, shop and arcades
John Bayes/Elaine Kirkaldie	Seasalter Shellfish
Neil McCollum/Anna Palmer	Canterbury City Council

Schedule 5: Presentation to Senior CCC Officers:

Ian Brown	Regeneration and Economic Development CCC
David Kincaid	Conservation and Countryside CCC
Jillian Barr	Planning Policy CCC
Nick Davies	Development Control CCC
Viv Pritchard	Transport CCC
Malcolm Burgess	Property Services CCC

Schedule 6: Other CCC Meetings:

Sarah Parker	Planning Policy CCC
Peter Brooks	Senior Engineer CCC
Neil McCollum	Tourism Manager CCC
Brian Watmough	Countryside Manager CCC
Steve Davies	Senior Planning Officer CCC

Schedule 7: Consultations Planned

Clare Munday	Environment Agency Biodiversity Officer
Tim Hodge	Kent Ornithological Society
Landowners	Farmland in West Wantsum

Schedule 8: Summary Notes from Workshop 29 November 2007

HIGHEST PRIORITY ISSUES

1. Access Road
2. Open the Reculver Towers more regularly
3. Car Parking
4. Improvement to visitor centre

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS/IDEAS (with updated masterplan commentary in coloured italics)

- Possible alternative access road along Wantsum/Saxon trail.

- Access road improvements would need councillor level lobbying
(access road improvements - see masterplan project 2.12; lobbying part of implementation strategy)

- Overflow car park needs improving (car park - see masterplan project 2.3)

- Capacity of car park needs to increase – should it double from 64 to 128?
(car park - see masterplan project 2.3)

- Possible new car park with geogrid or other 'green' system to avoid large areas of tarmac?
(car park - see masterplan project 2.3)

- Hilborough School has expanded causing further problems with drop off by car
(this element is outside of the direct masterplan boundary; see reference in access road improvements in masterplan project 2.12)

- Access road issues would be raised as part of Camping and Caravanning Club site planning application
(no specific action - to be noted)

- Cyclists car park outside centre of Reculver? (car park - see masterplan project 2.3)

- Highlighting of Heritage 'Rural Beach' – replace existing sign on Thanet Way with new one?

- Extending stay of day visitors?
(this is a wider issue related to a number of masterplan projects and inter-relationships of facilities)

- How can school groups spend money at local businesses?
(the masterplan cannot solve this - further discussion suggested between visitor centre and local businesses on what can be offered and the management of the school visits)

- Reducing physical barriers to use of all facilities e.g. hedges/level changes on corner near cafe
(village green - see masterplan project 2.02)

- New hedges/shrubs/trees(?) to replace any lost eco-habitats from removal of existing hedges
(see car park - masterplan project 2.3 and general environmental improvements - masterplan project 2.14)

- Free car parking?/revised parking charges (car park - see masterplan project 2.3)

- Stronger link between visitor centre and car park (see masterplan projects 2.1 and 2.3)

- Green tourism supported by CCC strategy (this is a wider issue related to numerous projects/strategies)

- Potential for existing businesses to expand audience (see masterplan projects 1.13 and 2.7)

- Strategic links to Thanet – cultural (bicycle already exists)

- Bicycle racks required (cycle facilities - masterplan project 2.4)

- Disability access to visitor centre and Towers (see masterplan projects 2.01 and 2.10)

- Play area with heritage 'theme'; previous issues with EH relating to foundations for play facilities outside of Scheduled Monument
(see masterplan project 2.11)

- Relationships with English Heritage – EH seen as resistant to all ideas (this is a perception and subjective viewpoint that cannot be directly solved through the masterplan; further communication however could be developed through the proposed private/public partnership group in masterplan project 1.08)

- Artifacts from earlier archaeological excavations – where are they? Could they be displayed at Reculver? (post meeting note – some artifacts held at Canterbury Cathedral – security issues at Reculver)
(see masterplan project 2.10 and 2.01)

- Post meeting note from Lawrence Sayer – could a private enterprise run the opening the towers?

- A new excavation? Timeteam? (see masterplan project 2.10)

- The Towers are the key element/brand of Reculver – possible developing and co-ordinating brand with stakeholders for overall visitor experience (see masterplan project 1.12)

- Towers only open once a year – need to open more often as high demand locally for this; not enough interpretation/ information on the site; are there ways the opening of the towers to be self-financing allowing them to open more often? Increased charge for visiting (see masterplan project 1.06)

- Could a risk analysis be taken to reduce amount of stewards etc required to open towers and keep costs down/ physical improvements to make safer to user (subject to approvals of EH) (see masterplan project 2.10)

- Roman wall should be made a clearer point of interest (post meeting note – EH looking at improvements to wall as possible project for 2008) (see masterplan project 2.15)

- New communication mechanism between council and businesses/stakeholders required – not to be based on model of 'Friends of Reculver' (see masterplan project 1.08 and 1.05)

- Information on Canterbury City Council projects to be distributed to caravan owners via Waterways/Blue Dolphin newsletters (see masterplan projects 1.05 and 1.08)

- Concern that improvements in Reculver could cause further problems if access road not resolved first.
(this is a sequencing issue - refer to implementation strategy)

- Post meeting idea from Lawrence Sayer – could there be a launch ramp for boats at Reculver? (this has not been put forward as a core proposal due to constraints of the SPA - see site designations

CONSENSUS

1. 'Green' tourism has a good 'fit' with Reculver
2. Village green concept makes sense with new frontages/facilities to face onto it
3. Visitor centre is a key starting point to improvements

bibliography and references

The following section records the key documents referred to or related to the masterplan development. Also a list of key contacts of agencies etc is provided for information.

Schedule 1: Background and Policy Documents

The Vision	Natural East Kent (June 2007)
Drainage Impact Assessment for Development Proposals	Canterbury City Council (March 20030
Isle of Grain to South Foreland Shoreline Management Plan	South East Coastal Group (May 2007)
Reculver Country Park Management Plan	Canterbury City Council
Canterbury District Local Plan	Canterbury City Council
Conservation Statement for Reculver Fort and Church	Liv Gibbs and English Heritage (adopted 2004)
Richborough and Reculver	English Heritage (reprint 2006)
The Roman Fort at Reculver	Brian Philp (9th edition 1996)
Reculver Country Park Wildlife Resource Pack	Kent Wildlife Trust
Reculver Country Park Geology Resource Pack	Kent Wildlife Trust
South East Coastal Strategy Interim Paper	SEEDA (April 2006)
Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk	Communities and Local Govt (December 2006)
Caravan Site Licensing Standard Conditions 1	Canterbury City Council (updated January 2008)
Kent and Medway Structure Plan	KCC (2006)
Appropriate Assessment of Spatial Plans in England	RSPB (2007)
Managing Natura 2000 Sites	European Communities (2000)
Kent Biodiversity Action Plan	Kent BAP Steering Group (1997)
The Viking Coastal Trail	Leaflet
Thanet Coast - Views about Management, Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	English Nature (update October 2005)
The Maritime Heritage Trail	Leaflet
Ecological Scoping Survey of Reculver Country Park	Bramley Associates (December 2007)

Key Links and Contacts

Canterbury City Council
Military Road
Canterbury CT1 1YW
tel: 01227 862000
www.canterbury.gov.uk

Natural East Kent
Suite 3, Honeywood House
White Cliffs Business Centre
Honeywood Road
Whitfield
Dover CT16 3EH
tel: 01304 872873
www.nek.org.uk

Kent Wildlife Trust
Tyland Barn
Sandling
Maidstone
Kent ME14 3BD
tel: 01622 662012
www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk

Environment Agency Kent Office
Orchard House
Endeavour Park
London Road
Addington
West Malling ME19 5SH
01732 223242
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Natural England
The Countryside Management Centre
Coldharbour Farm
Wye
Ashford TN25 5DB
tel: 01233 812525
www.naturalengland.org.uk

South East Coastal Group
Military Road
Canterbury CT1 1YW
tel: 01227 862453
www.se-coastalgroup.org.uk

English Heritage
South East Region
Eastgate Court
195-205 High Street
Guildford GU1 3EH
tel: 01483 252000
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Sustrans
www.sustrans.org.uk

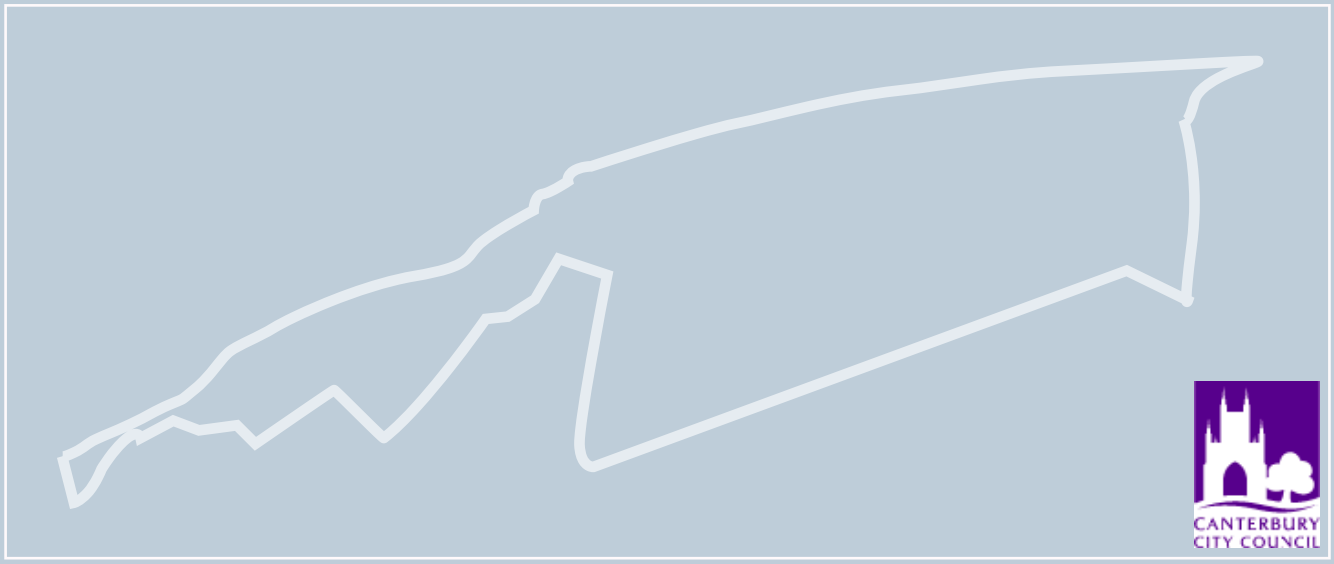
Viking Coastal Trail
www.vikingcoastal trail.co.uk

Maritime Heritage Trail
www.maritimeheritage trail.co.uk

reculver masterplan

project plans

volume 2



CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

project plan

reculver masterplan

volume 2

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FRONTISPIECE

Reculver Masterplan :Volume 2

Canterbury City Council (CCC)

- with additional financial assistance from East Kent Partnership

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Key CCC Consultees:	Neil McCollum, Tourism Manager
	Sarah Parker, Senior Planning Officer
	David Kincaid, Principal Conservation Officer
	Nick Davies, Senior Planning Officer
Consultants:	Allen Scott Ltd, Landscape and Architecture
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Document Control:	Final: 12 December 2008

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

acorn
Acorn Consulting Partnership Ltd
tourism development consultants

ALLEN SCOTT

Reculver Country Park Vision

introduction

This section of the masterplan report incorporates a series of costed project plans to assist in the implementation. It is intended as a 'live' working document and will be subject to regular review and update as the process of delivery develops.

Project Plans 01 - 06 deal with 'programmatic' proposals that relate to management and communication issues. Project Plans 07 - 17 relate to physical proposals.

The Project Plans are intended to be flexible and there is no reason why they cannot be grouped together as larger projects or further projects added. The costings are purely provided as an initial guideline at the early stages and are not to be used as fixed costs for implementation. The Plans should be read in association with Volume 1 of the Masterplan.

Generic Mitigation

Many of the projects have the potential to affect the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA, Thanet Coast SAC and Swale SPA in the same manner. They therefore require the same mitigation measures to be implemented. The following list comprises generic mitigation applicable to the Reculver Masterplan:

- The Thanet Coastal Codes for minimising disturbance to European Site features and information concerning the sensitivity of the coastal area to disturbance and its value and status as a European Site will be displayed in the visitor centre, with leaflets and signboards provided at strategic locations within the Country Park. These will also include information on the ecology of the site to provide visitor understanding of the need for a Code of Conduct.

- Detailed visitor access proposals will avoid directing the public towards coastal reaches favoured over-wintering bird populations of European importance and any walks and trails promoted will ensure a suitable buffer is maintained between the public and sensitive areas to minimise disturbance.

- Natural England supports the conclusions of the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) that the masterplan is not likely to have a significant effect on European Sites, and that the level of detail is generally appropriate. NE should be consulted on all detailed proposals, including visitor access, interpretation and accommodation, to ensure any potential disturbance to sensitive areas is considered and minimised with the design and construction stages.

- Construction works in proximity to areas used by over-wintering bird populations of European importance will be timed for the summer months, in order to avoid the over-wintering period, unless otherwise agreed with Natural England.

- Detailed proposals involving new lighting should be carefully considered in conjunction with Natural England such that increased light pollution to areas utilised by roosting turnstones is avoided.

- Residential and other sensitive development should be no closer than 15 meters to the Southern Water pumping station boundary to preserve the amenity from potential noise and odour effects and to ensure future access to the site (see Volume 1 8.2 for surface water and sewage consideration requirements). Any project that could have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European or Ramsar Site, alone, or in combination with other plans or projects, would not be in accordance with the aims and objectives of this master plan.

introduction (continued)

The Project Plans

Programmatic Plans;

- project plan 01 - reculver co-ordinator
- project plan 02 - reculver partnership
- project plan 03 - perception and promotion
- project plan 04 - interpretation strategy
- project plan 05 - reculver leaflets
- project plan 06 - business opportunity plan

Physical Plans;

- project plan 07 - visitor centre
- project plan 08 - car parks
- project plan 09 - village green
- project plan 10 - playground
- project plan 11 - frontage development
- project plan 12 - caravanning and camping club
- project plan 13 - heritage improvements
- project plan 14 - west wantsum
- project plan 15 - walking and cycling facilities
- project plan 16 - general environmental improvements
- project plan 17 - road improvements

reculver co-ordinator

Project Summary:

A Reculver Co-ordinator is employed with the objective of driving the delivery of the masterplan projects and co-ordinating the interests of all stakeholders.

Strategic Objectives:

LOCAL PLAN POLICY R13
- *Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*

NATURAL EAST KENT
- *Development of green tourism destination*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- *Encourage rural regeneration*
- *Encourage local visitors and 'Visiting Friends and Relatives' (VFR) market*

CYCLING STRATEGY FOR KENT 2006-11
- *Promote and educate visitors and local residents in cycle tourism and the network of cycle routes*

CCC WALKING & CYCLING STRATEGY
- *Create link with regional cycle routes*

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN
- *Objective 1:To develop Reculver Country Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 3:To involve the community in the management of the country park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *co-ordinated and effective management of the area bringing together public and private interests*
- *establishing clear linkages to the surrounding area and wider regional context*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*

The key aims of the co-ordinator would be to:

- Drive the delivery of the masterplan;
- Co-ordinate the management of partners and stakeholders;
- Deliver the regeneration of Reculver; and,
- Establish regional links

The priority would be to develop the country park as a quality destination for green tourism, including the development of high quality and sustainable accommodation provision.

1.01 Current Position

There are a number of public and private sector stakeholders involved in the management and provision of services at Reculver Country Park:

- Canterbury City Council
  - Strategic Planning – budgets
  - Countryside – operational issues, management of Towers and Fort
- Serco – Contract to CCC for grounds maintenance and management of public toilets
- Kent Wildlife Trust – Contract to CCC for Visitor Centre and visitor management
- English Heritage – ownership of Towers and Fort
- Camping and Caravanning Club – lease of CCC caravan site
- Blue Dolphin – owners of caravan park
- Waterways – owners of caravan park (tbc)
- Owners of shop, café and arcade
- Owners of the club house
- King Ethelbert Inn
- Seasalter Shellfish (Whitstable) Ltd

The current structure delivers the day-to-day running of the country park, however stakeholders have their own priorities. No single organisation has Reculver as their top priority. Communication between public and private sector stakeholders is acknowledged to be limited and the current structure is not considered to be effective in delivering the regeneration of Reculver.

Who Delivers?

Canterbury City Council and funding partners (see Funding Strategy below)

It is expect that this role could be delivered through a part-time post of 3 days per week.

1.02 Outline Job Description

Key Responsibilities:

Assist the stakeholders to work together and with the wider community to:

- Implement the Reculver Masterplan projects
- Enhance access for green tourism
- Improve the interpretation of the Reculver, particularly of historical and natural heritage issues.
- Market and brand the area and its products.

Funding:

- Identify fundraising opportunities
- Prepare applications
- Deliver funded projects
- Report to funders

Community Involvement:

- Set up and manage public-private partnership
- Hold regular quarterly meeting with key stakeholders on site, as listed above

Stakeholder liaison:

- Inform stakeholders about potential grants and training courses available to them
- Encourage and support local accommodation providers to apply for quality assessments
- Encourage local businesses to apply for sustainable accreditation such as Green Tourism Business Scheme, Walkers and Cyclist Welcome, David Bellamy Awards

Website:

- Commission design and installation of Reculver web pages or website
- Work with CCC web master to update and maintain website

Promotion of Reculver:

- Circulate quarterly online newsletter /e-mail informing stakeholders and public – private partnership, and community of activities relevant to the development of Reculver
- Develop interpretive material for inclusion on website , itineraries, leaflets and other related materials.
- Produce and distribute electronic and hard copy information and itineraries on walks, cycle routes, accessible routes and other activities; places to stay, eat and drink and shop as funding permits
- Liaise with relevant organisations (eg, CCC, KCC, TSE, Herne Bay and Margate TICs, Sustrans, Ramblers Association, Nord-Pas de Calais tourism organisations) to ensure their websites and publications are well populated with Reculver information
- Work with local and regional media and partners (to include Herne Bay, Margate and Canterbury) to raise perception and profile of Reculver

SALARY COSTS

• Scale 6	3 days per week	£13,550 - £15,000
• Employer's NI	@ 12.8%	£ 1,735 - £ 1,920
• Pension contributions	tbc	
• Costs and expenses	estimate	£ 3,000
TOTAL		**£18,285 - £19,920**

1.03 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding should be sourced from CCC and if possible other partners that will benefit from delivery of the Reculver Masterplan eg, English Heritage, Kent Wildlife Trust and the Camping and Caravanning Club.

Potentially a small proportion of the costs could be contributed by the businesses on the site to confirm their commitment masterplan and the potential benefits. Private –public sector partnership contributions to the Reculver Co-ordinator post would encourage delivery of the masterplan to the benefit of all stakeholders, and circumvent the co-ordinator being seen a CCC post.

Timing

2008-09 – Appointing a Reculver Co-ordinator is a priority project that should be funded prior to the full masterplan funding bid. The co-ordinator will be central to deliver of funding for other masterplan projects.

Implementation

- CCC to draft job description
- CCC Countryside section to set up meeting with potential funding partners to assess potential commitment and contributions
- Job Description to be agreed by all funding partners
- Source an additional funding
- Advertise post
- Interview and appoint suitable candidate.

SUMMARY POINTS

- critical catalyst project to enable phase 2 of masterplan
- appointment of key person to be central to successful delivery of aspirations

reculver partnership

Project Summary:

Establish a Public-Private Partnership Group to deliver a co-ordinated stakeholder approach to the development of Reculver.

Strategic Objectives:

NATURAL EAST KENT

- *Strategic Objective 2: Support the development of local projects which will implement the Natural East Kent concept locally.*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY

- *Build new ways to include local people in tourism*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- *Support the development of quality tourism in the District*

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007-2012

- *To involve the community in the management of the country park*

Who Delivers?

Canterbury City Council, through the Countryside section, until the Reculver Partnership has been established

Proposal Description

Establish a public-private partnership organisation.

Public, not-for-profit and private sector organisations with a direct involvement with Reculver Country Park and its immediate environs will be eligible to join. These organisations are currently:

Public Sector:	CCC
Not-for-profit sector:	Kent Wildlife Trust, English Heritage, Kent Archeological Rescue Unit, Camping and Caravanning Club
Private sector:	Blue Dolphin, Waterways, Owners road front premises, King Ethelbert Inn, Seasalter Shellfish (Whitstable) Ltd

Draft Constitution

1. TITLE
The Reculver Partnership

2. MISSION
To deliver and support projects that facilitate the development of Reculver to the benefit of all stakeholders, and in particular Reculver as a green tourism destination, as directed by the Reculver Masterplan.

3. STATUS
The Reculver Partnership is not owned or controlled by any single organization. All those involved remain independent.

4. AIMS
The Reculver Partnership aims to provide leadership and co-ordination for the development of Reculver as a high quality green tourism destination to the benefit of all members.

5. FUNCTIONS
- The Reculver Partnership will seek to achieve its aims inter alia:
- Working towards the delivery of the Reculver Masterplan
- Working with the Reculver Co-ordinator to deliver the masterplan
- Identify shared agendas and objectives amongst members
- Working in partnership with other members to deliver projects of common interest
- Improving communication between members
- Applying for appropriate funding eg, HLF Your Heritage fund
- Building relationships and networks with other potential green tourism destinations in the region to share information and best practice

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Management Group

The Management Group will comprise of one member nominated from:

- CCC Countryside Section
- CCC Tourism Section
- Kent Wildlife Trust
- English Heritage
- Kent Archeological Rescue Unit
- Camping and Caravanning Club
- Blue Dolphin
- Waterways
- Owners road front premises
- King Ethelbert Inn
- Seasalter Shellfish (Whitstable) Ltd

The Reculver Co-ordinator will be a member of the Management Group.

6.2 Officers

A Chair and Secretary shall be elected by the Management Group from within its membership each year at the Annual General Meeting. The Secretary will minute the Management Group meetings.

6.3 Frequency of meetings:

The Management Group will meet at least four times per year.

6.4 Quorum

Quorum for the Management Group shall be one third of the membership of the Management Group. In the event of a meeting being inquorate any recommendations made at that meeting shall require approval at a subsequent quorate Management Group meeting.

6.5 Voting

Voting at the Management Group meeting when required shall be by a show of hands and matters determined by a single majority. All Management Group members will have one vote and in the event of equality of voting, the Chair shall have the single casting vote.

A declaration of interest shall be made by any member where there is a conflict of interest in the matter under discussion.

6.6 Terms of Reference

The Management Group is responsible for:

- Representing the interests of members
- Being the voice of the members
- Working with the Reculver Co-ordinator to deliver the Reculver Masterplan
- Raising the profile of Reculver
- Encouraging
- Improved communication between stakeholders
- On site management issues including security, vandalism
- Event scheduling, promotion and management
- Improved quality of all on-site visitor facilities
- Projects that encourage green tourism eg, for walkers, cyclists, birdwatchers
- Projects that encourage sustainability and environmental awareness
- Funding applications where appropriate
- Training opportunities for businesses

7. FINANCE

The Management shall determine appropriate arrangements for the administration of the financial affairs of the Reculver Partnership, should direct funding become available.

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8.1 One meeting of the Board each year (normally the April meeting) shall be designated the Annual General Meeting. The business of the Annual Meeting shall be to:

8.1.1 Elect the Chair and Vice Chair.

8.1.2 Receive and endorse the membership of the Board.

8.1.3 Receive and endorse any financial statement of accounts to March 31st (if appropriate)

8.1.4 Consider any amendment to the constitution or any other resolutions for which due notice has been given.

Budget

The legal fees to set up the Constitution may be up to a maximum of £1,000. If possible the legal work will be undertaken by Canterbury City Council's legal team at minimal cost.
It is not expected that the Reculver Partnership will have direct costs or its own budget to undertake projects, but that its members will support the projects funded as part of the Reculver Masterplan.
However as a community not-for-profit organisation the Partnership may be able to apply for funding for masterplan projects that is not available to other organisations.

Timing

The Reculver Partnership can be set up once the Reculver Masterplan has been finalised.

Next Steps

1. CCC Countryside Officer to call an initial meeting with the proposed members to establish whether there is sufficient support to set up the Reculver Initiative.

2. Consult CCC legal department on draft Constitution.

3. The draft constitution to be discussed at the first meeting to establish the commitment and interests of potential members.

4. Set dates for future meetings.

perception and promotion

Summary:

To improve the perception and promotion of Reculver by producing a:

i) Co-ordinated Brand Identity for the park
ii) Reculver Website
iii) Country Break itinerary

Strategic Objectives:

LOCAL PLAN POLICY R13
- Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver

NATURAL EAST KENT
- Development of green tourism destination
- Virtual connections with regional walking, cycling provision
- Provision of good interpretation of natural and heritage assets

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- Encourage increased length of stay
- Use innovative interpretation to make Canterbury District accessible
- Encourage rural regeneration
- Build new ways to include local people
- Encourage local visitors and people visiting friends and relatives

CYCLING STRATEGY FOR KENT 2006-11
- Encourage cycling as an alternative to the private car for local journeys
- Promote and educate visitors and local residents in cycle tourism and the network of cycle routes

CCC WALKING & CYCLING STRATEGY:
- Create links with regional cycle routes

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007 – 2012
- Objective 1: Develop the country park as a quality attraction for tourist markets
- Objective 3: Involve the community in the management of the country park

1. BRAND IDENTITY

Project Objectives

The development of a co-ordinated brand identity that can be used by all stakeholders at Reculver Country Park, and can be used across all media, will underpin the aim to change the perceptions and profile of Reculver.

Who Delivers?

Canterbury City Council or Reculver Co-ordinator to commission a branding consultancy to create a brand and associated design guide.

Proposal Description

To develop a brand identity and design guide (working in consultation with Natural East Kent) in order to promote a clear identity and associated set of values for Reculver Country Park. The brand design will be used on all future signage, interpretation and media output and communication from and within the country park including:

- Directional signage
- Website
- Promotional literature
- Exhibitions
- Interpretative trails and other interpretative media
- Exhibitions
- Events

Consultants Outline Brief:

Create a brand identity and set of sub brands, each focusing on a different audience, and associated design guide for Reculver Country Park.

The brand must be flexible and scalable to enable it to be used in association with other local and regional initiatives.

i) Assess the current situation and understanding of the site:
Develop a full understanding of the country park's assets and proposals for current and future interpretation to include:

- an assessment of existing and potential audiences
- an assessment of existing interpretation in the park and visitor centre
- consideration of the park's heritage assets and their significance
- consideration of exisiting and potential future brand associations eg, with NEK, KWT

ii) Develop the park's brand values through research and consultations

iii) Develop names for the main brand and sub-brands

iv) Develop a draft logo and associated graphics and colours for the brand and sub-brands

v) Design Guide
Finalise the brand logo's, colour palettes and names and incorporate them into a house style that can be used on all future media to include:

- An introduction and description of the 'house style', its development and reasoning – the use of colours, typeface, logos, size of text
- Templates for the layout options for letter headings, faxes, emails, Powerpoint slides
- Use of language, types of image and style of photography to be used in marketing and promotional material

Implementation Costs

Consultants fees - £10,000

Timing

The brand identity of the park needs to be in place prior to implementation of Reculver's dedicated website and the implementation of the projects recommended by the interpretation strategy.

Next Steps

Funding
The cost of commissioning consultants to develop the brand identity for Reculver will be part of the overall masterplan funding bid.

Implementation

- Finalise Consultants brief
- Source branding companies and circulate brief
- Commission consultants.

WEBSITE

Project Objectives

A dedicated Reculver website would provide:

- Improved profile of Reculver
- Pre-visit destination information to potential visitors to encourage them to increase the length of their visit to Reculver
- Educational and interpretive information
- A marketing opportunity for local businesses
- A communication channel for public and private sector stakeholders
- Links with wider Kent region eg, Herne Bay, Margate, Canterbury,
- Links with other developing 'green' tourism destinations: Grove Ferry, Pegwell Bay, Romney Marsh

Who Delivers?

- Canterbury City Council Countryside and Tourism Departments and webmaster
- Reculver Co-ordinator
- CCC and Co-ordinator in collaboration with other stakeholders:
- Kent Wildlife Trust, English Heritage, Camping and Caravanning Club, Blue Dolphin, King Ethelbert Inn, other businesses

Proposal Description

A Reculver website can be delivered in two stages:

Stage 1:

- Reculver pages to be built on the existing Canterbury City Council website www.canterbury.gov.uk or www.canterbury.co.uk

These web pages would include:

- Information on developments at Reculver
- Communication channel with stakeholders
- Feedback facility for visitors
- Links to websites of potential funding bid partners
- Information on walks and cycle routes from Reculver

Proposal Description continued..

Stage 2:

When sufficient masterplan projects have been implemented, and funding is available a dedicated Reculver website can be built.

Build a dedicated visitor orientated website eg, www.visitreculver.org to include the following pages:

- Home – introduction to Reculver and on-site facilities
- How to get to Reculver – include map
- Where to stay – accommodation in area (including Herne Bay and Margate)
- Where to eat and drink – including cafes, restaurants, pubs to walk and cycle to
- What to buy – local produce, crafts
- What's On - Events
- Visitor Centre - opening hours and activities, courses
- What to do: walks, cycle routes, bird watching, riding, days out, itineraries
- Bird sightings
- History – from Romans to present day, include timeline
- A special landscape
- Local guides – publications available for walkers, cyclists, historians, naturalists
- Easy Access – accessibility information
- Photo library – copyright free photos
- Links - other CCC website/ other relevant sites/ European destinations, Herne Bay, Margate and Canterbury sites, European partners, stakeholders etc

The Reculver Co-ordinator and Canterbury City Council's IT department will update and maintain the site.

Implementation Costs

Canterbury City Council's IT department would undertake both Stage 1 and Stage 2 and it is not expected that additional funding would be required.

Timing

- Stage 1: 2008-09
- Stage 2: 2009 onwards, once sufficient Masterplan projects have been implemented and the Reculver Co-ordinator is in place to keep the site updated and maintained.

Next Steps

Funding:
Funding for Stage 1 and 2 will be resourced Canterbury City Council budgets during 2008 and 2009.

Implementation:
The Countryside and Tourism departments of CCC will implement Stage 1 in liaison with the web-master for www.canterbury.co.uk

- Countryside and Tourism departments will need to decide the most appropriate location and content for these first webpages, together with a plan for their future development.
-
- Stage 2 will be delivered by the Reculver Co-ordinator when Masterplan funding is in place.

3. COUNTRY BREAK ITINERARY

Project Objectives:

The Reculver Country Break itinerary aims to develop green tourism by encouraging local community participation to promote access to Reculver's outdoor activities and its local businesses.

Who delivers?

There are two options for writing the initial itinerary:

- Option 1 - Reculver Partnership
- Option 2 - Independent Consultant

The Reculver Co-ordinator would be responsible for updating the itinerary.

Proposal Description

Develop a web based Country Break itinerary to provide visitors with information about walking, cycling and other outdoor activities, together with places to stay, eat, shop and buy local produce and crafts in the area. For example see The Blean Country Break itinerary at www.ruralways.org..uk/countrybreaks

The itinerary will use the existing Country Break template that is available from Mid-Kent Downs AONB unit or Rural Ways at Tourism South East.

The itinerary will be delivered by working with local businesses and community groups to collect information and collate information and images.

The itinerary will be available on www.ruralways.co.uk , Tourism South East's rural activities website. It can also be loaded onto Reculver's own website, once developed, and the information used to populate other sites such as

- CCC's tourism pages
- KCC 's Explore Kent pages
- Sustrans

The Reculver Co-ordinator, in conjunction with information collected by the public-private partnership would be responsible for keeping the itinerary updated.

Budget Estimates for Implementation

Option 1: £1,000

Delivery by Public-Private Partnership on a voluntary basis would involve minimal cost, but would involve a time allocation from the Reculver Co-ordinator of 5 days over a 4 – 6 week period, at cost of around £500. Cost of up to £500 to cover communications and image expenses.

Option 2: Delivery by independent consultants – 5 days at £400 = £2,000

Timing

The Country Break itinerary can be implemented once the Reculver Co-ordinator has been employed and Public-Private Partnership is running effectively. The Country Break itinerary can be put onto the Rural Ways website immediately and can be added to the Reculver website at a later stage.

Early delivery could be achieved if funding is available to use independent consultants.

Next Steps

Implementation:
Countryside Manager or Co-ordinator to meet Mid-Kent Downs AONB Unit or Rural Ways to obtain template and discuss development of the itinerary and sources of funding.

Funding:
Option 1: would be funded through the Co-ordinator's salary. The responsibility for delivering the itinerary should be written into the job description.

Option2: Leader + has been used to fund similar itineraries in East Sussex and in Faversham. This could be pursued if the itineraries are not funded as part of the overall Masterplan.

interpretation strategy

INTERPRETATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Summary:

An Interpretative Strategy is needed to provide a co-ordinated approach to future interpretation at Reculver and to identify and cost the specific interpretation projects. The strategy will encompass the wealth of natural and built heritage at Reculver and the role of the different stakeholders in delivering interpretation to all potential audiences.

Strategic Objectives:

NATURAL EAST KENT

- Strategic Objective 4: Create a strategic access and interpretation infrastructure network that meets the needs of sustainable tourism
- Tactical Objective 2: Develop interpretation requirements including the development of stories that link the people with the places and heritage features

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY (2003-2006)

- Use a variety of innovative interpretation and technology to make the heritage of Canterbury District accessible to all and encourage visitors to participate

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007-2012

- Objective 1 – To develop Reculver Country Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets identified in the Canterbury Tourism Strategy:
- Interpretation Strategy – To develop the range and quality of educational and interpretative material over the next 5 years

The key aim of the interpretation strategy would be to provide a co-ordinated approach to all interpretation projects across the country park so that they:

- Improve the visitor experience by providing high quality sustainable interpretation
- Educate and inform visitors about Reculver's natural and built heritage (see Project Plan 13 for historic interpretation recommendations)
- Establish and improve physical and intellectual links to the surrounding area
- Improved way finding and access
- Improve the perception and profile of Reculver

Who Delivers?

Canterbury City Council Countryside department should commission consultants to undertake the Interpretation Strategy.

Why an Interpretation Strategy?

"Interpretation is the process of communicating to people the significance of a place or object, so that they can enjoy it more, understand their heritage and environment better, and develop a positive attitude to conservation"

Interpretation should aim to provoke, relate and reveal. This means that interpretation should:

- Provoke a response from or encourage thought by visitors
- Reveal a new insight into the site or topic to visitors, giving them a new understanding
- Relate to visitors' own understanding and experience and be relevant to them.

In this way interpretation can have different influences on a visitor's experience and can be used to address different objectives, related both to communication and to visitor management.

The benefits and objectives of successful interpretation should consider the behavioural, emotional and educational impact that will offer visitors an exiting invitation to become involved in the process of learning from and protecting the natural and cultural environment.

Interpretation can be equally used to:
- Further visitors' understanding and appreciation of the site
- Improve visitor management.

The Interpretation Strategy would include an interpretive Action Plan that would identify and cost Interpretative Projects and implement a clear and co-ordinated approach to effective interpretation across Reculver Country Park, to improve and expand the interpretation of the park's cultural, heritage and landscape assets.

Proposal Description

Outline Brief for Consultants

The objectives of the Interpretative Strategy will be to:

1. Assess existing interpretation and visitor facilities at Reculver Country Park.

2. Identify the key current and potential target audiences for interpretation.

3. Assess Reculver's heritage assets and their significance.

4. Provide a Strategic Framework for future interpretation work at Reculver by partner organisations, in particular Canterbury City Council, Kent Wildlife Trust and English Heritage. To include:

4.1 An Interpretative Vision for Reculver through consultation with relevant partners (to include CCC, EH, KWT, KCC, Seasalter Shellfish Ltd) which seeks to recognize all that is significant about Reculver and its associated landscape.

4.2 Interpretive Objectives: identify the management and interpretative objectives and associated desired outcomes for Reculver:

- The management objectives to be determined are visitor management, financial and marketing objectives
- The interpretive objectives to be determined are learning, emotional and behavioural objectives

4.3 Interpretive Principles to guide all future interpretation: based on best practice, an understanding of the site, the vision and objectives.

4.4 Key Interpretive Message to be delivered by Reculver's interpretation.

5. Identify key Interpretive Themes and supporting storylines to communicate the themes. Themes are expected to include inter alia:

- Local heritage: Reculver Towers to Richborough and Wantsum Channel
- Environment: Geology, Natural History, Changing habitats, Energy, Recycling, Climate Change, Sea Defences
- Sea Scene: Windfarm, Cooling Towers, Forts, Sandbanks, Estuary, Erosion
- Gateway for Natural East Kent

6. Provide an Interpretation Action Plan that will recommend and cost interpretive projects.

7. Interpretive Branding: use the Reculver brand to develop a coherent graphic treatment and 'house style' for use on all future interpretive media (internal, external, web based and in publications).

8. Develop a Marketing Guide to link interpretation into marketing activities.

9. Develop Monitoring procedures for assessing the success of future interpretation projects.

10. Identify Funding sources available to Canterbury City Council, KWT or English Heritage to implement, maintain, update and develop the projects proposed in the strategy.

Which Interpretive Media?

There is a wide spectrum of media that could be employed to deliver the interpretation. The main objective in choosing the appropriate media would be:

- Not to compete with the existing interpretive provision but encourage improved provision through a partnership approach
- To encourage people to explore the landscape on the existing pathways, possibly extending the pathway network (subject to any change of route, see Volume 1 7.3.8)
- To provide effective low key interpretive media that does not impede on the landscape or adversely affect the archaeology, and is cost effective
- To adequately deliver the interpretive objectives outlined above.

Static on-site media can include:

- Wind-up audio
- Interpretive structures (i.e. panels or bio-degradable installations within the countryside)
- Art and sculpture
- 3D models
- Play equipment
- Way markers / installations supporting orientation

In addition to static structures, visitors could use mobile media to help them understand and orientate themselves in and around Reculver:

- Leaflets
- Trail guides / self-complete quizzes relating to the landscape
- Guidebooks
- Mobile interpretation via dial-up interpretation to be used via mobile phones or PDAs
- Tour guides / Volunteer interpreters
- Education Packs

Additionally, interpretation for the site could incorporate the following virtual means, independent of the provision of space on the site:

- Web-site pages dedicated to the archaeology and landscape of Reculver
- Local Heritage initiative and community research projects
- Related talks as part of local history course
- Including landscape and archaeology related information in interpretation elsewhere.

If electronic dissemination is prioritised, an electronic platform should be developed to support all the electronic interpretive access points for Reculver including the website, mobile information based systems (eg, PDA tours, or mobile phone downloads), visitor centre exhibitions.

Implementation Costs

Consultants fees to undertake Interpretation Strategy £7,500 + vat
The Interpretation Strategy will identify the cost of specific interpretation projects.

Timing

The Interpretation Strategy can be commissioned as soon as funding has been secured to deliver the masterplan. The brand identity for Reculver should be produced in time to be incorporated into specific interpretation projects.

Next Steps

Funding

Option 1 – source funding for Interpretation Strategy as part of overall masterplan funding bid

Option 2 –Canterbury City Council funds Interpretation Strategy prior to masterplan funding bid, so that funding bids for implementation of specific interpretation projects can be included in the masterplan bid.

Implementation

Canterbury City Council to finalise Interpretive Brief to be put out tender.

Commission consultants to undertake the Interpretive Strategy and Action Plan.

leaflets

WALKING AND CYCLING LEAFLETS

Summary:

The creation of circular walking and cycling routes that start and finish at Reculver is central to the vision of Reculver as a green tourism 'hub'. A series of Reculver Walking and Cycling Leaflets would promote the circular rights of way together with the cafés, pubs, farm shops, visitor and visitor accommodation en route, and interpretative information on the natural and built heritage along the trail.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH EAST COASTAL STRATEGY:
- Maximise connectivity along the coast

NATURAL EAST KENT
- Strategic Objective 4: Create a strategic access infrastructure network that meets the needs of sustainable tourism.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY (2003-2006)
- Encourage rural regeneration through walking and cycling.

CANTERBURY WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY
- Implement and promote a network of safer walking and cycling routes

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007-2012
- To encourage sustainability and healthy lifestyles by creating an environment suitable for walking and cycling; promoting access for all

The key aims of producing walking and cycling leaflets is to:

- Promote Reculver as a regional hub for green tourism
- Support rural regeneration by promoting local businesses
- Improve the experience of visitors to Reculver
- Improve wayfinding and access
- Optimise the use of Reculver's coastal and countryside location
- Establish clear links to the surrounding area
- Change the current perception and profile of Reculver

Who Delivers?

The Reculver Co-ordinator will be responsible for developing walking and cycling leaflets in conjunction with Canterbury City Council and Kent County Council.

Proposal Description

Routes

A series of leaflets will be produced working in consultation with Natural East Kent and Kent County Council's Countryside Access Service (CAS) to promote:

- Circular walking and cycling routes that start and finish at Reculver.
- Routes that link Reculver to public transport connections eg,
  - Reculver Primary School (Stagecoach bus route 36) into the 'Wantsum Walk' that runs adjacent to the school and runs through the Park to the visitor centre.
  - Herne Bay station on the Saxon Shore Way to Reculver Country Park
  - Routes that link Reculver to regional and national walking and cycling trails
  - Strategies objective K3 (Produce and distribute information on
  - circular walks and health walks.) and K7 (Work in partnership to improve regional/
  - national/international awareness of walking, cycling and horse riding
  - opportunities in Kent. to directly support tourism objectives) of the Countriside Acccess Improvement Plan (CAIP)

The length and degree of difficulty of the routes will need to be clearly identified.

Existing Rights of Way should be used and in particular it is recommended that the current Wantsum Walks are restored, signed and maintenance agreements established so that they can be fully promoted.

Editorial Content

The leaflets should include the businesses located along the route that provide services and facilities

Design

Leaflets should be designed to include the Reculver Brand Identity and to be clear and usable as pdf documents.

Distribution

Printed leaflets should be distributed at the visitor centre, King Ethelbert Inn and other businesses at the Country Park and along the routes; as well as from Canterbury, Herne Bay and Margate Visitor Centres and rail stations.

To finalise the size of the print run it will be necessary to identify the number of distribution points and estimate the annual number of visitors at each point.

Leaflets should be available as pdf documents to be downloaded from the Reculver website and other stakeholder sites including: www.visitCanterbury.co.uk; www.visitKent.co.uk; www.ExploreKent.co.uk.

Electronic versions of the leaflets should be widely linked to relevant websites in the region including other 'green tourism hubs' and to niche interest sites such as Sustrans and the Rambler's Association.

Promotion of the electronic pdf leaflets should be a priority in order to reduce print costs and enable editorial updates to be undertaken on a regular basis.

Budget Estimates per Leaflet

Task	Quantity	Rate	Cost
Research – route checking; businesses verification	2 days	£350	£ 700
Copy writing & proofing	2 days	£350	£ 700
Design: artwork, illustrations, mapping			£2,000
Printing 3,000 leaflets			£ 700
Distribution Via Co-ordinator			
Total per leaflet			£4,100

Timing

The Rights of Way that will be used for the trails will need to be agreed and restored before they can be promoted in new leaflets.

The Reculver Brand Identity and recommendations for interpretation from the Interpretation Strategy should be incorporated into the leaflets.

Next Steps

Route Development:
Public Rights of Way routes identified in the masterplan are indicative. In particular Kent County Council's Countryside Access Service (CAS) will need to be consulted and routes agreed with all stakeholders including Natural East Kent before detailed design.
Repairs, waymarking, interpretative signage and longterm maintenance agreements will need to be put in place.

Funding:
Once the routes are identified and are restored to a suitable standard, funding can be sourced to produce the leaflets.

Implementation:

The Reculver Co-ordinator should commission and manage consultants to produce the series of leaflets.

06 - business opportunity plan

Summary:
New business opportunities for Reculver are proposed:

1. To operate self-catering and bed and breakfast guest accommodation from the new frontage buildings.

2. To operate a cycle hire facility at the country park.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH EAST COASTAL STRATEGY
- Support business start-ups and collaboration
- Release the enterprise potential of tourism industries

NATURAL EAST KENT
- Strategic Objective 2: Support the development of local projects which will implement the Natural East Kent concept locally.

KENT TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY/ CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY (Both strategies to be finalised)
- "To enable tourism to benefit communities, visitors and the environment, economically, culturally and sustainably"
- Promote regeneration
- Provide diverse visitor offer
- Provide high quality short break offer
- Develop good quality self-catering accommodation
- Improve perception of Coastal Kent

CANTERBURY DISTRICT COMMUNITY STRATEGY
- Support the development of quality tourism in the district

CANTERBURY LOCAL DISTRICT PLAN 2006
- Policy R13: Proposals to further enhance the attraction of Reculver as a destination for visitors will be permitted.

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007-2012
- To develop Reculver Country Park as a quality attraction for target visitor markets

Project Objectives:

The key aims of the new business opportunities (which should be developed in consultation with Natural East Kent's Area Access Plan) are to:

- Support the masterplan vision to develop a high quality regional hub for green tourism
- Provide high quality sustainable facilities to improve the visitor experience
- Support rural economic regeneration
- Increases Kent's good quality short break accommodation offer
- Expand the range of visitor accommodation provision in Reculver

The Environment Agency acknowledges the findings of the Reculver Strategic Flood Assessment (SFRA) and the principle of redevelopment, but all planning applications for individual proposals (especially residential purposes) will need to be accompanied by Site Specific Flood Risk Assessments, to pass part C of the Exception Test, as outlined in Planning Policy Statement 25.

Who Delivers?

Private sector stakeholders eg, Blue Dolphin, King Ethelbert Inn, Waterways or owners of the road frontage building.

The Co-ordinator should support the businesses in sourcing any relevant grant funding; understanding the value of the quality assessment scheme and Green Tourism Business Scheme and arranging training for the businesses where applicable.

Quality Assessed

New visitor accommodation at Reculver should be quality assessed by the Visit Britain scheme to:

i) Respond to market demand for quality accommodation
ii) Enable it to be promoted by local, regional and national tourist boards
iii) Deliver the masterplan vision of a high quality green tourism hub

Green Tourism Business Scheme

Quality Assessed accommodation can benefit from training and apply for membership of the Green Tourism Business Scheme.
Membership of the GTBS:

i) Responds to increasing legislative and consumer demand for environmentally sustainable visitor accommodation
ii) Delivers long-term financial savings from implementing sustainable
principles such as energy-saving and waste recycling measures
iii) Supports the masterplan vision to create a sustainable green tourism hub

Walkers, Cyclists and Pets Welcome!

The national tourist board, Enjoy England, run Quality Assessed schemes that encourage accommodation providers to offer facilities for, and promote themselves to, the growing number of people who want to take walking and cycling holidays, and people that want to bring their pets on holiday.

QuickTime™ and a decompressor are needed to see this picture.

A. SELF-CATERING

Proposal Description

Two blocks of four three-bedroom units, with two additional corner units, are proposed for the frontage next to Waterways Caravan Park.

These units would be built on environmentally sustainable principles and would be operated as self-catering units, ideally as part of the Green Tourism Business Scheme with Walkers and Cyclists Welcome accreditation.

The self-catering units could be promoted through the owners' website, the Reculver website and through local, regional and national tourist boards as well as through niche market websites for walkers, cyclists, birdwatchers, artists and photographers.

The proposed layout of the units means that larger groups, such as the educational market, could use them.

This quality self-catering accommodation may also appeal to visitors wanting to visit Canterbury but preferring to be based in a coastal location.

Indicative Financial Scenario

The proposed buildings have been designed as blocks of four units; each block can be built separately. The financial proposal presented here is based on one block.

Revenue per block	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 11
Average rent per unit week	500	525	551	579	608	814
Average rent per unit week	2,000	2,100	2,205	2,315	2,431	3,258
Occupancy rate	40%	48%	58%	63%	70%	70%
No. of weeks rented	20.80	24.96	29.95	32.95	36.24	36.24
Income	£41,600	£52,416	£66,044	£76,281	£88,105	£118,069
Annual cost per block						
Loan repayments	32,616	32,616	32,616	32,616	32,616	0
Outstanding loan	293,544	260,928	228,312	195,696	163,080	0
Interest at 8%	26,093	23,484	20,874	18,265	15,656	0
Cost of finance	58,709	56,100	53,490	50,881	48,272	0
Building maintenance	1,359	1,359	1,359	1,427	1,498	2,008
Cleaning & laundry	2,080	2,163	2,250	2,340	2,433	3,079
Utilities	2,080	2,163	2,250	2,340	2,433	3,079
Marketing	1,000	1,100	1,210	1,331	1,464	2,594
sub-total	6,519	6,785	7,068	7,437	7,829	10,759
Additional costs @20%	1,304	1,357	1,414	1,487	1,566	2,152
Total costs	£66,532	£64,242	£61,972	£59,806	£57,666	£12,911
Revenue/Loss	-£24,932	-£11,826	£4,072	£16,475	£30,438	£105,157
Return on investment(ROI)	-11%	-5%	2%	8%	14%	48%

Based on the assumptions below, a small profit would be generated in Year 3. After the loan is fully repaid in Year 10, a substantial income and return on investment would be anticipated.

Assumptions:

Size per unit:

Floor space	100 m2
Number of bedrooms	3
Number of beds	6

Capital Costs:

Build cost per m2	£1,200
Professional fees	@ 12% (architect, surveyor etc)
Cost of furnishing	£15 per square metre
Cost per unit	£135,900
Cost of block	£543,600

Site cost not included

Cost of finance:

Capital equity	40% (£217,400)
Loan equity	60% (£326,160)
Interest rate	8% - fixed
Repayment terms	10 years

Revenue:

Average rent Year 1 £500

Rental rates increase by 5% per year.

Occupancy Rate Year1 40%

The occupancy rate used for Year 1 is cautious. In Kent the average occupancy rate for self-catering accommodation during April – June 2007 was 68%. The occupancy rate is predicted to increase by 20% for the first 2 years, and slow to 10% per year until it reaches 70% in Year 5 when it remains stable.

Annual running costs:

Building Maintenance	0.25% of capital cost for3 years; increasing by 5% from Year 4
Cleaning per unit	2 hours per week @ £10 per hour
Laundry per unit	£5 per week
Utilities per unit	£25 per week for water, electricity etc
Marketing per annum	£1,000
Additional costs	@ 10% of annual running costs for rates, licences, insurance etc

Cleaning, laundry, utilities increase with inflation at 4% per annum.

Marketing increases by 10% per year to ensure high occupancy rates

B. B&B GUEST ACCOMMODATION

Proposal Description

The proposed B&B Guest Accommodation would be in a frontage building that matches the self-catering blocks. The new building, adjacent to the King Ethelbert, would consist of four units each comprising three bedrooms. A total of 12 double or twin rooms would be available to up to 24 guests, who would have their breakfast at the King Ethelbert.

As with the self-catering units, the B&B Guest Accommodation would be built on environmentally sustainable principles and should be operated so they become accredited by the Green Tourism Business Scheme and have Walkers and Cyclists Welcome accreditation.

VisitBritain categorises accommodation offering more than 6 rooms on a bed and breakfast basis as a guest house, and a pub that offers rooms is know as an Inn.

The B&B units could be promoted through a website set up by the King Ethelbert Inn, and marketing activities should be targeted at similar audiences to those that have been identified for the self-catering units.

This quality guest accommodation may also appeal to visitors to Canterbury who prefer serviced accommodation in a coastal location, rather than self-catering.

Indicative Financial Scenario

The financial proposal presented here is based on one block of 4 units.

Revenue per block	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 11
Rate per head per night	25	26	28	29	30	41
Annual revenue per block	183,960	193,158	202,816	212,957	223,605	299,651
Occupancy rate	35%	42%	50%	55%	60%	60%
Income	£64,386	£81,126	£102,214	£118,063	£133,884	£179,417
Annual cost per block						
Cost of finance						
Oustanding loan	342,468	304,416	266,364	228,312	190,260	0
Loan repayments	38,052	38,052	38,052	38,052	38,052	0
Interest at 8%	30,442	27,397	24,353	21,309	18,265	0
Building maintenance	1,359	1,359	1,359	1,427	1,498	2,008
Cleaning & laundry	6,643	6,909	7,185	7,472	7,771	9,833
Utilities	6,132	6,377	6,632	6,898	7,174	9,077
Marketing	1,000	1,100	1,210	1,331	1,464	2,594
sub-total	15,134	15,745	16,386	17,128	17,907	25,512
Additional costs @20%	3,027	3,149	3,277	3,426	3,581	4,702
Total costs	£86,654	£84,343	£82,069	£79,915	£77,806	£28,214
Revenue/Loss	-£22,268	-£3,217	£20,150	£38,148	£56,078	£151,203
Return on investment(ROI)	-14%	-2%	12%	23%	34%	93%

The B&B Guest Accommodation would start to generate profit from Year 3. Once full loan repayments had been made in Year 10, the income generated would be substantial.

The assumptions detailed below are similar to the self-catering operation, however a lower proportion of capital investment is assumed; occupancy is lower and income is estimated on a nightly rather than a weekly basis.

Assumptions:

Size per unit:	
Floor space	100 m2
Number of bedrooms	3
Number of beds	6

Capital Costs:

Build cost per m2	£1,200
Professional fees	@ 12% (architect, surveyor etc)
Cost of furnishing	£15 per square metre
Cost per unit	£135,900
Cost of block	£543,600
Site cost not included	

Cost of finance:

Capital equity	30% (£163,080)
Loan equity	70% (£380,520)
Interest rate	8% - fixed
Repayment terms	10 years

Revenue:

Average room rate Year 1 £25 per person per night
Room rate increases by 5% per year

Occupancy Rate Year1 35%

The occupancy rate used for Year 1 is conservative. In Kent the 2007 average occupancy rate for serviced accommodation, which includes B&B and guesthouses, was 51% and in Canterbury District it was 58%.

The occupancy rate is predicted to increase by 20% for the first 2 years, and slow to 10% in Year 4 and 8% in Year 5, when it reaches 60% . After Year 5 it remains stable.

Annual running costs:

Building Maintenance	0.25% of capital cost for3 years; increasing by 5% from Year 4
Cleaning per unit	1 hour per day @ £10 per hour
Laundry per unit	£2 per bed per night
Utilities per unit	£2 per bed per night for water, electricity etc
Marketing per annum	£1,000
Additional costs	@ 10% of annual running costs for rates, licences, insurance etc

Cleaning, laundry, utilities increase with inflation at 4% per annum.
Marketing increases by 10% per year to ensure high occupancy rates.

Timing

The provision of high quality short stay visitor accommodation is key to getting visitors to stay longer in Reculver and support the regeneration of the area.

Due to the scale of private sector investment required for developing the self-catering and B&B Guest Accommodation, it is unlikely that these projects will go ahead until after the Camping and Caravanning Club investment in its site has commenced, and private sector stakeholders are confident that other masterplan projects are financed and will go ahead.

Next Steps

Funding:

Private sector investment and commercial finance would be required.

Implementation:

1. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to be completed by April 2008.
2. Full feasibility study and business plan to be undertaken
3. Proposed plans to be discussed with Planning Department

2. CYCLE HIRE FACILITY

Project Objectives

The key aim of setting up a cycle hire facility at Reculver is to:

- Provide an opportunity for safe cycle storage- facility could be provided by local businesses from Reculver Lane
- Provide facilities to support development of Reculver as a green tourism hub
- Promote rural regeneration

Who Delivers?

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the cycle hire facility it should be set up as a commercially run operation, however it could be run by:

- A commercial company
- An existing cycle hire company eg, Viking Coastal Trail Bike Hire
- One of the private sector stakeholders at Reculver
- The Reculver Partnership or other local community group

Proposal Description

A cycle hire facility would be set up at Reculver to provide visitors with the opportunity to hire bikes at the country park, encouraging visitors who do not have their own bikes to cycle at Reculver. Safe cycle storage could also be considered for visitors staying at Reculver.

It is expected that the cycle hire facility would operate out of one of the ground floor units of the new frontage buildings. However, if the facility is established before the new frontage is built, it could be run from a mobile unit.

The cycle hire facility would offer bikes for adults and children, together with specialist bikes such as trailer buggies, tandems and wheelchair bikes.

In addition to the large number of day visitors to Reculver, customers would come from the owners and guests of the static caravans, the touring pitches at the Camping and Caravanning Club site and visitors to the self-catering and bed and breakfast accommodation.

Indicative Financial Scenario

It is estimated that it will cost around £8,250 to set up the cycle hire facility with 50 bikes. A small profit would be generated from the outset growing to over £50,000 per annum by the fifth year, on the basis that Reculver would become a regional green tourism hub in future years.

Assumptions:

Set up costs:

Cover purchase of bikes and specialist accessories; building a website and producing marketing leaflets.

Annual running costs:

Cover rent or cost of a mobile unit on a monthly basis, one full time and one part-time member of staff; marketing and the cost of bike spares. Additional costs to cover rates, licenses and insurance have been calculated at 20% of the annual running costs. Capital depreciation is over a 3-year period.

Set up costs	Number	Cost £	Total
Bikes	30	250	£7,500
Accessories	20	50	£1,000
Website	1	1,000	£1,000
Leaflets	1,000	0.25	£ 250
Total			£8,250
Annual Costs			
Rent/mobile unit	12	200	£2,400
Staff incl. NI	1.5	18,000	£27,000
Marketing	12	100	£1,200
Bike parts	100	10	£1,000
Subtotal			£31,600
Additional costs @20%			£6,320
Total running costs			£37,920
Depreciation over 3 years			£2,750
Total Annual Costs			£42,170

Income:

Off-season: Oct-March — Open Fri, Sat, Sunday
Daily customers — 3 families (1 adult + 1 child); Sat/Sun only
3 single adults

High-season: April-September — Open Tues – Sunday
Daily customers — 8 families (1 adult + 1 child); Sat/Sun, holidays only
8 single adults

Income	No of Bikes	Rate/day £	Days/Week	No. of Weeks	Total
Oct-March					
Adults	6	12	3	26	£5,616
Child	3	10	2	26	£1,560
April-Sept					
Adults	16	12	6	26	£29,952
Child	8	10	4	26	£8,320
Trailer buggies	4	8	4	26	£3,328
Total					£48,776

Net Revenue:

Income — Increase by 20% per year as Reculver becomes a regional hub
Costs — Increase with inflation @4% per year

Net Revenue	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5
Income	£48,776	£58,531	£70,237	£84,285	£101,142
Costs	£42,170	£42,297	£43,989	£45,748	£3,328
Balance	£ 6,606	£16,234	£26,249	£38,537	£53,564

Timing

A mobile cycle hire facility could be established immediately. A permanent facility would need to wait until the new frontage or other suitable premises were available.

Next Steps

Funding

Private sector investment would be required.
Alternatively, if the operation was run by a community group, options may be available to source funding to set up the facility, for example from Leader + grants.

Implementation

A feasibility study and business plan to be undertaken by potential private investors.
Reculver Co-ordinator to explore potential funding for community operators.

visitor centre

Project Summary:

Construction of extension/part refurbishment to existing visitor centre facility to increase usable area, address perception and wayfinding issues and incorporate sustainable construction and technologies.

Enhancement of external appearance, landscaping and interpretation through Phase 2 of the masterplan

Long term consideration of larger new build facility to accompany potential increased usage of the site for green tourism/education/activities.

Strategic Objectives:

LOCAL PLAN POLICY R13
- *Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*

NATURAL EAST KENT
- *Development of green tourism destination*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- *Encourage rural regeneration*
- *Encourage local visitors and VFR market*

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN
- *Objective 1:To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 3:To involve the community in the management of the Country Park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *providing high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *improved wayfinding and access*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*

existing visitor centre building

7.01 Current Position

- Attracts approximately 25000 visitors per annum and clearly performs a highly useful educational role but is limited by staffing/costs/facilities as well as following items:
  - opening hours limited, especially in winter
  - limited interpretation on historic elements/sustainability
  - main focus on wildlife/geology as run by Kent Wildlife Trust
  - some minor vandalism issues
  - low profile/poor signage - many visitors not aware it exists or come when it is closed
- CCC have prepared scheme that has attained planning permission; alternative scheme prepared by masterplan consultants to address more of the masterplan issues within same budget parameters; masterplan proposals based on alternative scheme.

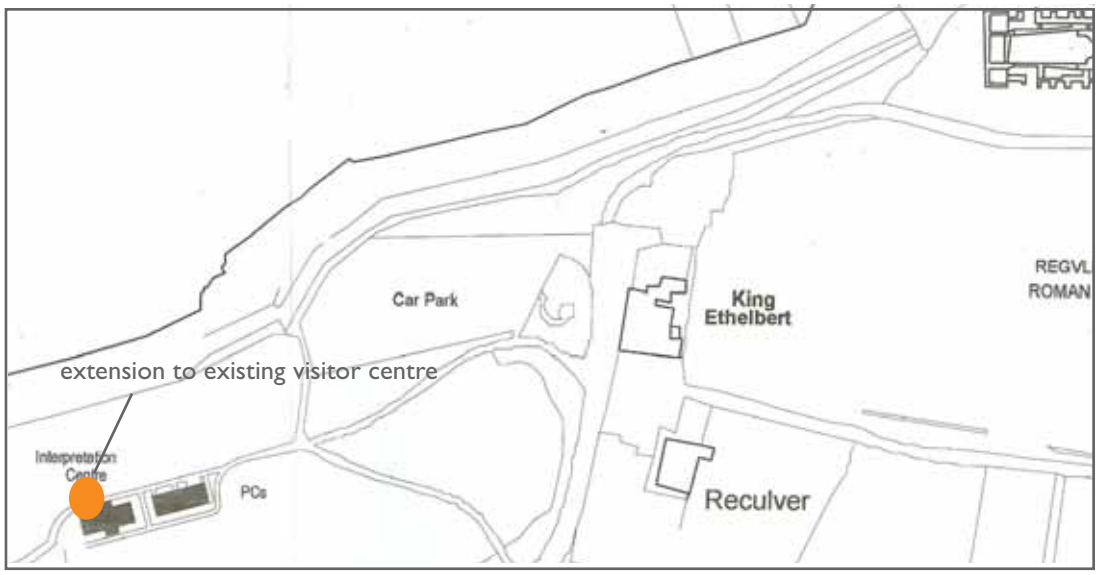
7.02 Proposal Description

The visitor centre facilities are proposed to be developed in three phases. The initial phase will extend the existing facility within the currently available funding. The second phase will then enhance the building in its setting and respond to changes in routes, car parking and develop further external interpretation. A final phase is to build a new larger facility on a different part of the site. This is a long term aspiration and will depend on the overall success of other elements of the masterplan that will underpin its business and funding case.

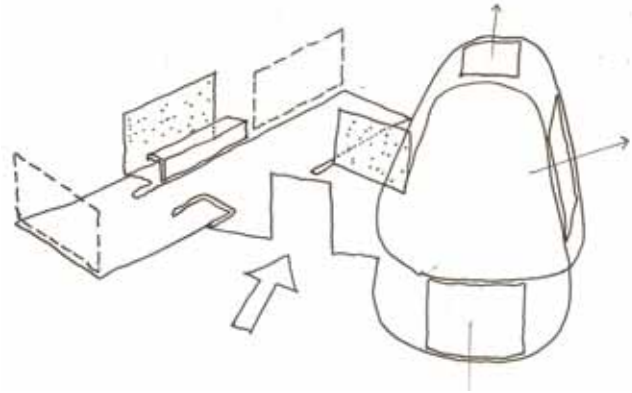
MASTERPLAN PHASE 1 (1-2 years)
- single storey extension to north of existing visitor centre;
- provision of new multi-purpose space, store and main entrance;
- partial refurbishment of other areas
- incorporation of sustainable construction and renewables technologies
- minor improvements to external works and public toilets
- designed to work with existing path layout/car park location as well as phase 2.

MASTERPLAN PHASE 2 (2-5 years)
- new landscaping and external works to correspond to changed car park/village green
- new mosaic murals to gable ends
- screen walls to south with branded signage and lighting

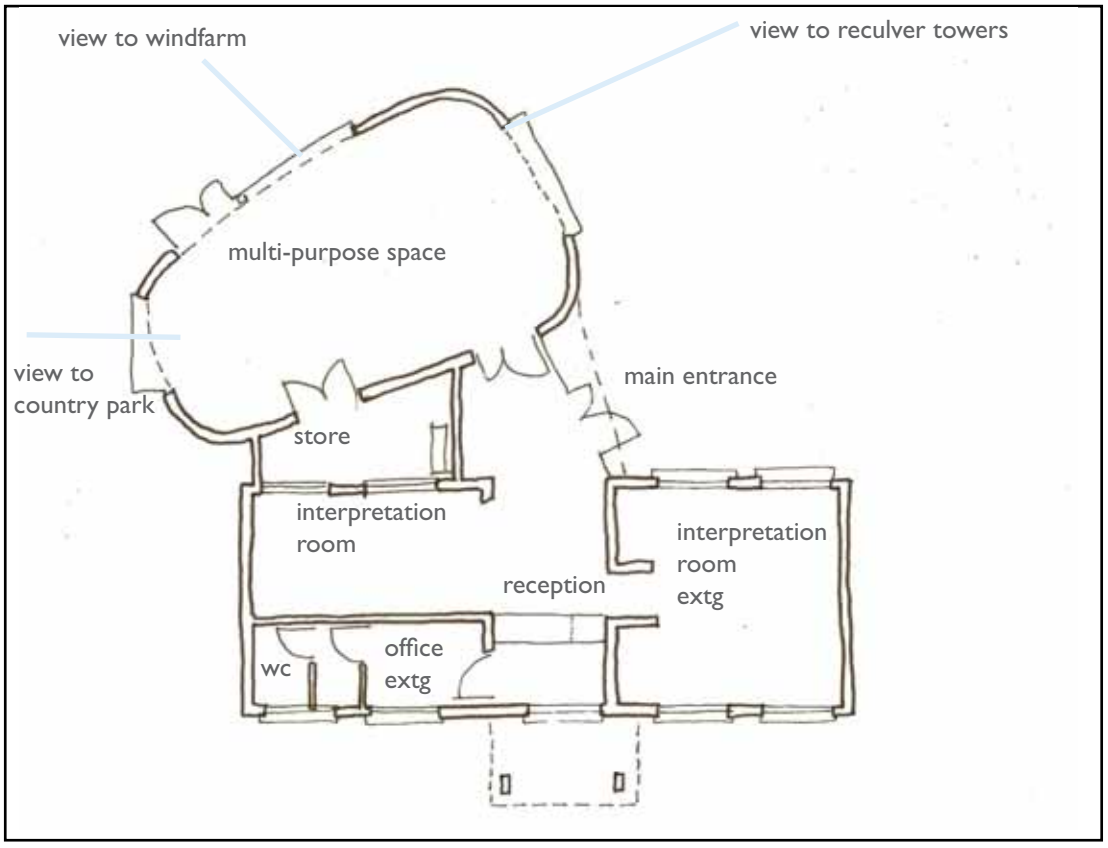
MASTERPLAN PHASE 3 OR 4 (5-25 years)
- new larger purpose-built facility on different part of site
- new usage of Phase 1/Phase 2 building



phase 1 site plan

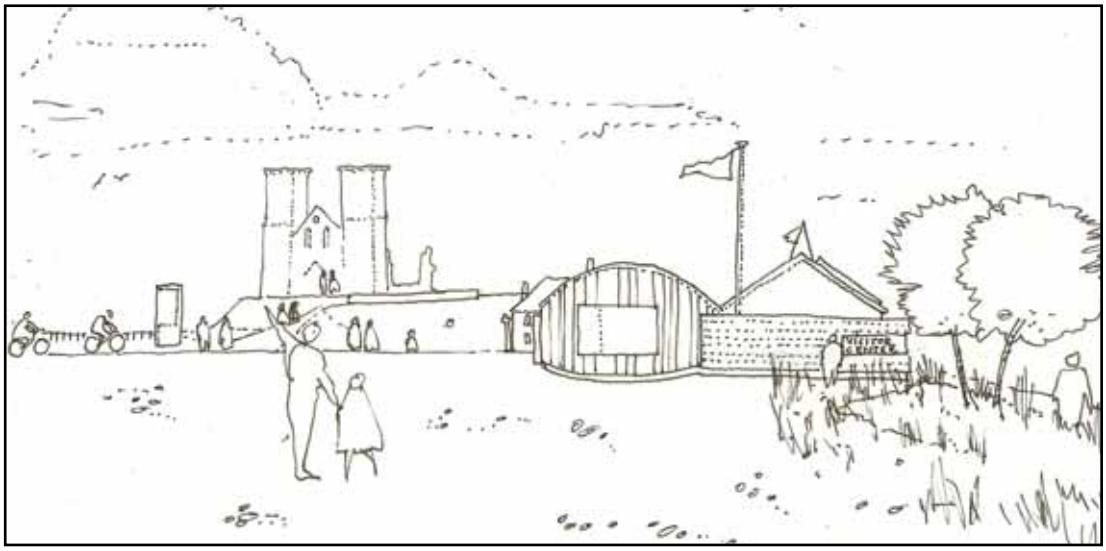


phase 1 - concept sketch

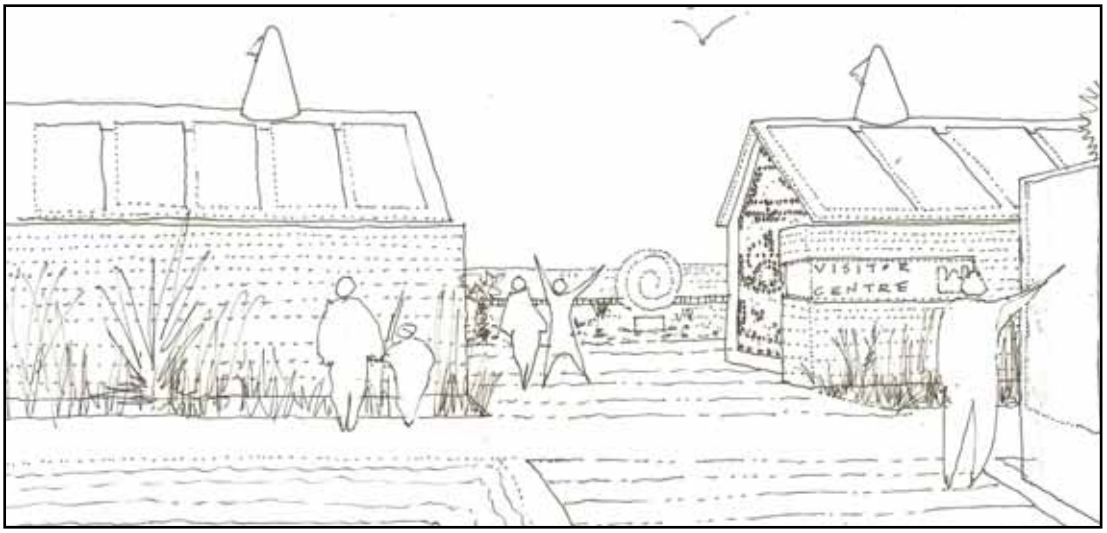


phase 1 layout plan

phase 2 site plan

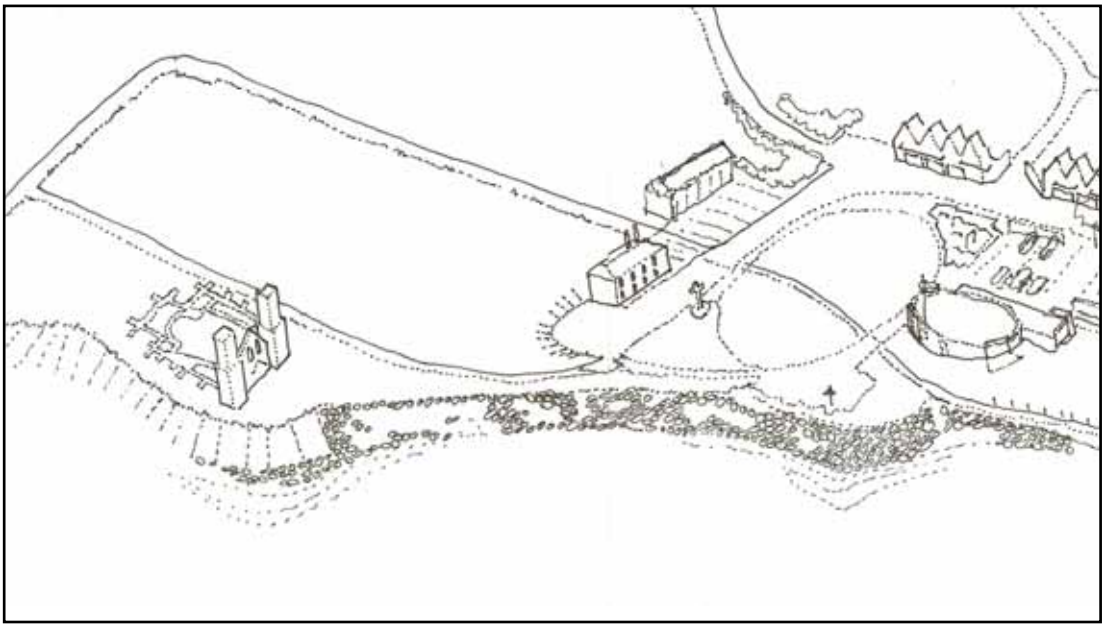


phase 2 - view from country park (approach from west) with outer screen wall, landscaped edges and new path layouts



phase 2 - view from proposed new car park (approach from south) with outer screen wall, landscaping and mosaic murals

masterplan phase 3/4



phase 3/4 - new visitor centre connected to village green or new wetlands

phase 3/4 - new high quality enlarged visitor centre - RSPB Rainham Marshes

phase 3/4 - new high quality enlarged visitor centre - North Lincolnshire

7.03 Proposal Budget Allowances

PHASE 1

Construction costs (including preliminaries)	£ 150,000
Design Fees @ 19% of construction cost	£ 28,000
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 5,000
Design/Site Contingency	£ 10,000
FFE	£ 8,000
total	£ 201,000

PHASE 2

Construction costs (including preliminaries)	£ 30,000
Design Fees @ 13% of construction cost	£ 3,900
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 1,500
Design/Site Contingency	£ 3,000
total	£ 38,400

PHASE 3/4

Construction costs (including preliminaries)	£1,000,000
Design Fees @ 15% of construction cost	£ 150,000
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 20,000
Design/Site Contingency	£ 60,000
FFE	£ 25,000
total	£1,255,000

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs

7.04 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding for Phase 1 of the scheme has already been secured through Kentish Flats Windfarm and Canterbury City Council capital budgets. Additional funding is being negotiated with Kent Wildlife Trust and Kent Energy Centre to enhance elements of the scheme. Possible other monies available for DDA access improvements through CCC. Funding for Phase 2 would be part of an overall bid for European monies through the Interreg 4 programme. Phase 3/4 funding source would need to be reviewed nearer the time as part of an overall feasibility exercise.

Timing

Phase 1 - Subject to planning permission and market forces on tendering, the project is due to be on site late autumn 2008 and open late spring 2009.

Phase 2 - 2 to 5 years depending on funding

Phase 3/4 - 5 - 25 years depending on funding and overall success of strategic objectives

Implementation Sequence

Phase 1

- CCC to appoint consultants to develop scheme for planning submission
- Conclude funding/scope discussions
- Assuming planning granted CCC to instruct consultants to progress to tender
- Appoint contractor

Phase 2

Critical path linked to other projects in Phase 2 of the masterplan (car park/village green)

- Appoint design consultants
- Development of co-ordinated design
- Attain consents
- Detail design/tender/construction

Phase3/4

- Review implementation as part of feasibility study at later stage.

SUMMARY POINTS

- critical catalyst public sector project
- early implementation of first phase possible
- later review for feasibility of larger visitor centre

car parks

Project Summary:

The removal of the existing car park in response to local businesses concerns on its capacity, to enhance the coastal edge adjacent to the SSSI and Scheduled Ancient Monument and to create the 'village green' (refer to Project Plan 09). Its replacement with a larger and enhanced car and coach park adjacent to the visitor centre with two overflow car parking areas for peak times.

Long term consideration of a larger car park on the southern approach to Reculver in order to remove parking from within the hub, if and when the country park is extended and/or a new build visitor centre is realised.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH-EAST COASTAL STRATEGY

- Supporting business and regeneration

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

- *R13: Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*
- *NE1: Enhances SSSI and SPA*
- *C36: Protects the undeveloped coast*
- *R7: Enhances the Area of High Landscape Value*
- *BE7: Enhances the Conservation Area*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY

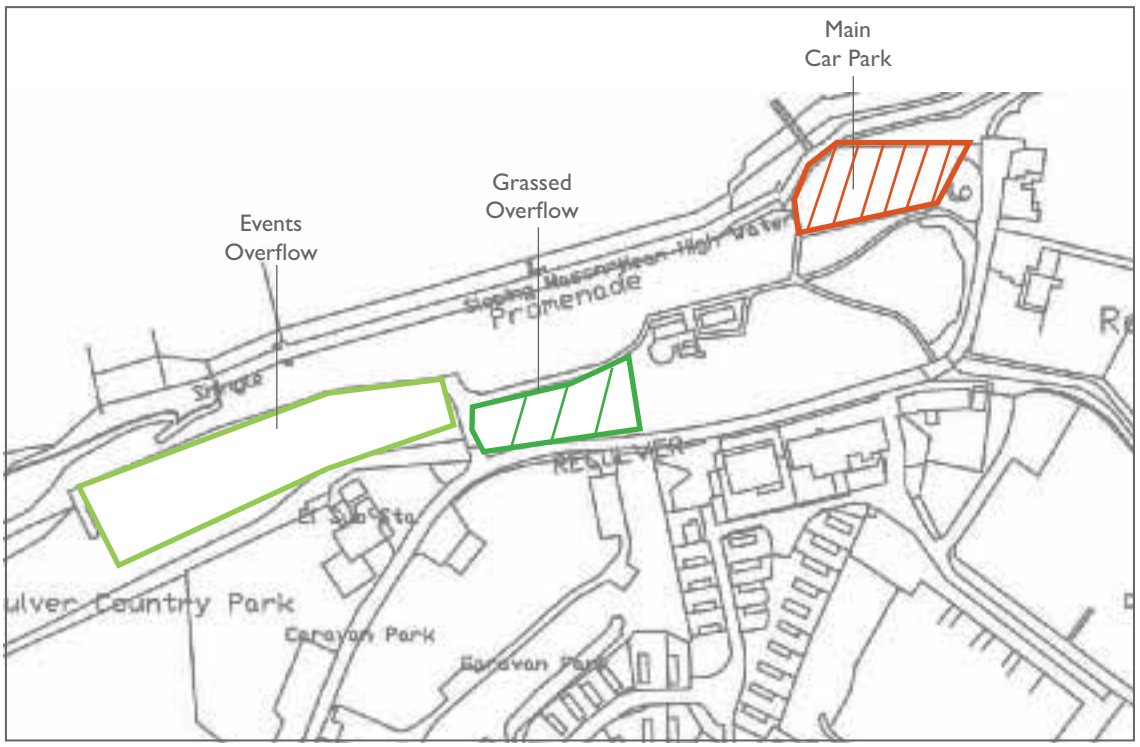
- Protect and improve heritage and local distinctiveness;

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

- *Objective 1:To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 3:To involve the community in the management of the country park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *providing high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *improved wayfinding and access*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths such as SSSI and SAM*
- *co-ordinate management of the area bringing together public and private interest*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*



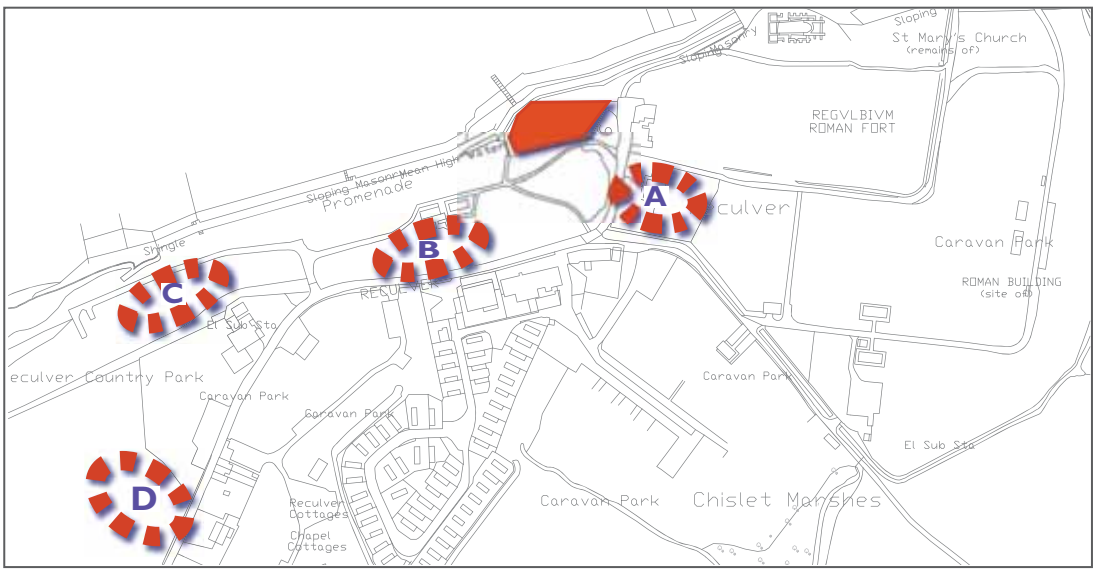
Existing car parks

8.01 Current Position

With approximately 75% of the 100,000-150,000 visitors per annum the existing car park's capacity of 66 spaces plus 3 disabled spaces is limited at peak times. Local businesses have reported potential customers turning away due to lack of space and that new car parking charges have also discouraged them from staying longer.

The current location is also considered to be detrimental to the visual quality of the coastal edge and the Towers, particularly given the number of protective designations that apply.

There is a grassed overflow car park to the immediate south-west of the visitor centre although spaces are not marked. Visiting coaches (mainly school parties) may use this overflow site but visits to the visitor centre are less than they might be due to the rather dis-jointed relationship between the visitor centre and the current car park.



Alternative locations considered for the main car park (refer Volume 1)

8.02 Proposal Description

To relocate the central car park to allow the creation of the village green and to improve the setting of the Towers and the coastal edge. The proposed new location would be between the visitor centre and Reculver Lane and would link to the existing but re-organised and re-surfaced grassed overflow and coach park. The capacity of the main car park would be only slightly larger than the existing but greater managed use of the coach/overflowl area would help to provide a more flexible arrangement. Subject to detail design it would provide approximately:

- 70 spaces on hardstanding
- 8 disabled spaces on hardstanding (with a further 3 disabled spaces near the Towers)
- 30 spaces on reinforced grass
- 2 coach parking spaces

The existing facility of events overflow on the grassland to the west would also be maintained.

Detail design considerations:

The aim is to create a landscaped car park that does not visually intrude on the country park and breaks up the impression of a large parking area from Reculver Lane. The coach/overflow is likely to get lower usage than the main car park and so a reinforced turf is recommended whilst the main parking area should preferably be a bound gravel or a proprietary 'SuDs' type paving to soften its visual impact. Due consideration must also be given to any water runoff to the Thanet Coast and Swale SSSI's from associated hard surfaces.

The parking layout gives a soft geometry while keeping a high efficiency within the site constraints. Hedge, tree and shrub planting will need to be carefully incorporated to break up the parking bays while retaining key views across the car park to the Towers, visitor centre and country park. A curving pathway along the northern edge links the country park to the village green along the south of the visitor centre. On this route will be a cyclists meeting point and general welcome/information and interpretation panels.

To allow a managed flexibility there are three access points from Reculver Lane. The coach park has an entry and exit point to avoid the need for coaches to turn around or reverse. The main car park has a single entry/exit point. A gated link between the two allows the overflow facility to be managed. Detailed feasibility work on levels and vehicle tracking will be required to 'firm up' the proposals.

Also a review of parking charges is proposed to encourage visitors to stay longer without reducing income.

8.02 Proposal Description continued..

A longer term strategy is to provide an additional satellite car park outside the central area. Usage of this by cyclists/walkers would be encouraged. It is also proposed to provide 3 disabled parking bays at the end of Reculver Lane nearest to the Towers.

In order to enhance the character of the village green, the eastern end of Reculver Lane is to be resurfaced with a bound gravel system. This will highlight the linkage between the public facilities such as cafe shops etc to the village green. The change in treatment is also intended to have a traffic calming effect and to suggest a pedestrian priority in this area.

Extract from the masterplan showing the treatment of Reculver Lane and the new car park separated by a change in materials

View east across the propsoed site. Note better relationship with visitor centre

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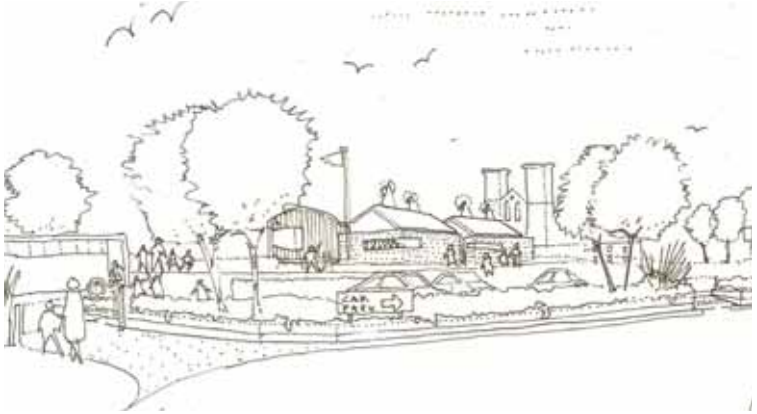
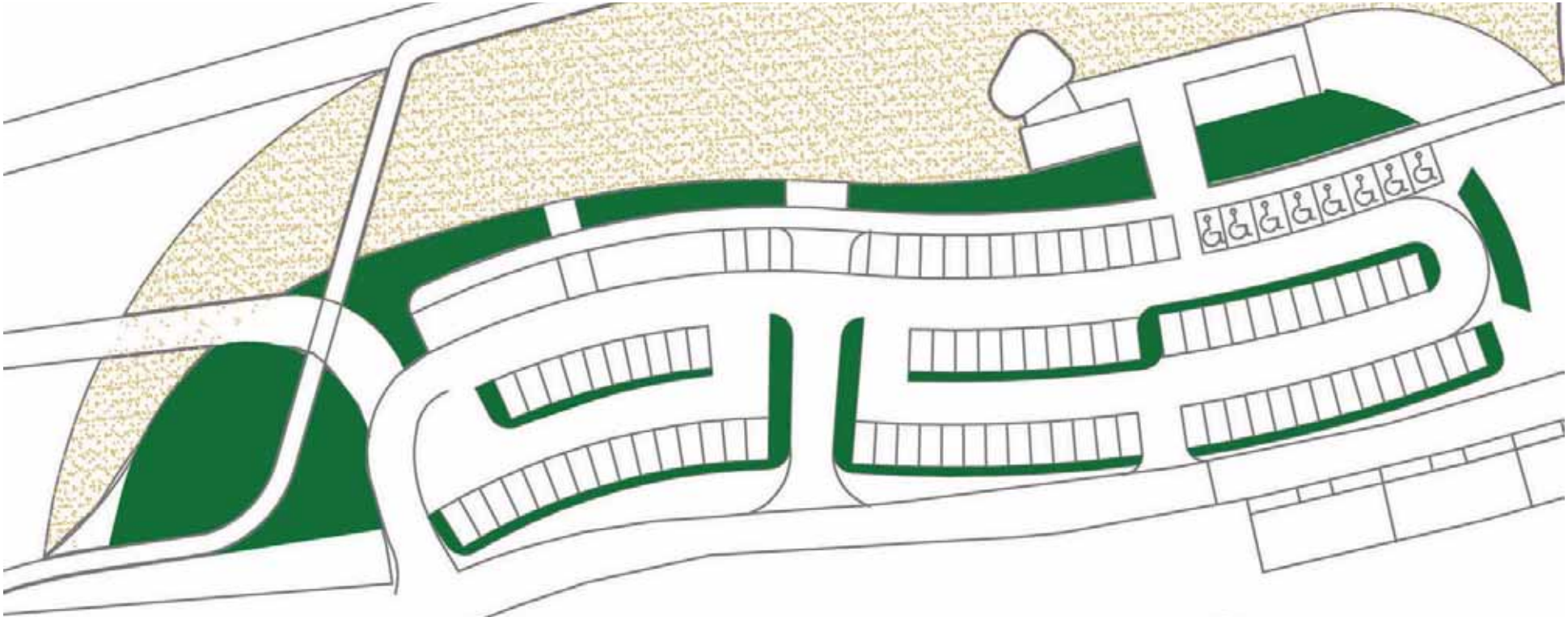
Layout and circulation approach





project plan 08 - car parks

8.03 Proposal Budget Allowances

EXISTING CAR PARK* - approx 1850 sqm

Removals - tarmac, kerbs, excavation, services	£ 10,000
Removals - fence, meters, gateway, signs	£ 3,000
Topsoil (from proposed car park site) and grade	£ 6,000
Turf (from proposed car park site)	£ 4,500
6 months maintenance	£ 1,300
Design Fees @ 19% of construction cost	£ 4,700
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 1,500
Design/Site Contingency	£ 3,500
total	£ 34,500

PROPOSED CAR PARK - approx 1900sqm + 1500 sqm(reinfcd grass)

Removals - excavate ground, sleeper fences	£ 20,000
Grade, prepare sub-base, fill and compactType 1	£ 23,500
Kerbs / edging	£ 5,500
Bound gravel or SuDs surface	£ 55,500
Reinforced grass with rootzone	£ 43,000
Signs, gates, bollards	£ 11,500
Planting	£ 12,500
Design Fees @ 19% of construction cost	£ 31,500
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 2,500
Design/Site Contingency	£ 15,000
total	£ 220,500

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs

* Allowance for making good to turf finish. Final formation into Village Green included in Project Plan 09

8.04 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding would be part of an overall bid from a capital funds programme.

Timing

Funding for Phase 1 of the visitor centre has already been secured through Kentish Flats Windfarm and Canterbury City Council capital budgets. It would provide a positive message for Reculver for the new car park to follow immediately behind to provide improved access and relationship to the upgraded Visitor Centre.

Subject to funding the car park could be constructed in two main phases:

Phase 1 - Ideally the bound gravel or SuDs part of the car park would follow on from the visitor centre in late spring 2009.

Phase 1a - Removal of the existing car park and restoration of ground once new hardstanding car park is open.

Phase 2 - Subject to funding the reinforced grass part of the car park would ideally be constructed at the same time as the hardstanding area but could follow on at a later date with use being made of the existing grass area for overflow use.

Implementation Sequence

Phase 1

- CCC to appoint consultants to develop scheme for planning submission
- Conclude funding/scope discussions
- Assuming planning granted CCC to instruct consultants to progress to tender
- Appoint contractor

Phase 2

Concurrent with Phase 1 or subject to later funding
- Appoint design consultants
- Development of co-ordinated design
- Attain consents
- Detail design/tender/construction

SUMMARY POINTS

- Key project in enhancement of the coastal edge and village green project
- Early implementation of first phase with visitor centre desirable
- Provides a more coherent parking strategy and overflow capacity

village green

Project Summary:

The creation of a central focus space for Reculver that provides a high quality and uncluttered setting for the Towers, Visitor Centre, King Ethelbert Inn and proposed new frontage accommodation (see Project Plan 11).

The project would also answer concerns of local businesses to do with visibility across the existing space, access and quality of maintenance of the existing shrubby edges.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH-EAST COASTAL STRATEGY

- Supporting business and regeneration

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

- *R13: Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*
- *NE1: Enhances SSSI and SPA*
- *C36: Protects the undeveloped coast*
- *R7: Enhances the Area of High Landscape Value*
- *BE7: Enhances the Conservation Area*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY

- Promote regeneration
- Develop new facilities and attractions
- Protect and improve heritage and local distinctiveness

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

- *Objective 1: To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 2: Achieve national standards of excellence*
- *Objective 3: To involve the community in the management of the country park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *providing high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *improved wayfinding and access*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths such as SSSI and SAM*
- *co-ordinate management of the area bringing together public and private interest*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*

Existing edge. Retaining sleeper wall and shrubby edges restrict free access and obscure views into space

9.01 Current Position

The quality and clarity of the existing grass space is compromised by its planted and raised edges, the existing car park and the unnatural landform. The result is a space that is not connected to its surroundings or as usable and attractive as it should be.

Various views showing edge conditions, landform and lack of clarity

Diagram showing the Village Green's key setting and relationship with other major projects (visitor centre, playground, frontage development.

Masterplan extract of Village Green

9.02 Proposal Description

The proposed enhancement of the green creates a stronger geometry and identity for this central space to allow it to become a focus for the buildings and facilities around it in a clearer and more direct manner. It also creates a landscaped space in front of the SAM rather than a tarmac car park. The space would also have a direct link to the sea through linking with the sea wall structure and raised walkway.

It is intended to be multi-purpose in usage. It should form the focus for events, a stopping point along the walking/cycling routes, a meeting place, a place for orientation before moving to another part of the site, a spill out space from the pub, cafe, playground and visitor centre as well as a general space to relax. It will be open in character and defined by a hierarchy of paths that pick up on main desire lines.

It is proposed as simple maintained terraces including connected wildflower, selfcolonising and amenity grassland areas appropriate, with occasional pine tree clusters and bound gravel paths. The cycle link from Herne Bay crosses the centre of the space and ties into the existing Sustrans route to the south of the King Ethelbert Inn. Paths will be generous and open to allow safe usage on a shared basis. It is not proposed to segregate different users.

By re-working the existing topography into three simple terraces a strong physical and visual linkage between the central space and the buildings around such as the King Ethelbert Inn and the proposed 'frontage' buildings (incorporating a new cafe, shop, holiday accommodation and ideally other new businesses such as cycle hire). It allows the road to be 'softened' and safer to pedestrians and cyclists. as existing visual screens on the corner will be removed.

Limited and carefully considered and co-ordinated signage and furniture will keep visual clutter to a minimum while providing safe and useful facilities. There are opportunities for artwork pieces as well as possible kinetic scupltures linked to the sustainable technology from the visitor centre.

The existing Millenium Cross is retained and given a more defined setting. It should be noted that to allow the village green to be developed as shown the existing car park will need to be moved.

Detailed plans for the Village Green should be developed in consultation with Natural England.

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Typical cross sections showing simple terracing and relationships with the sea edge and proposed frontages

project plan 09 - village green

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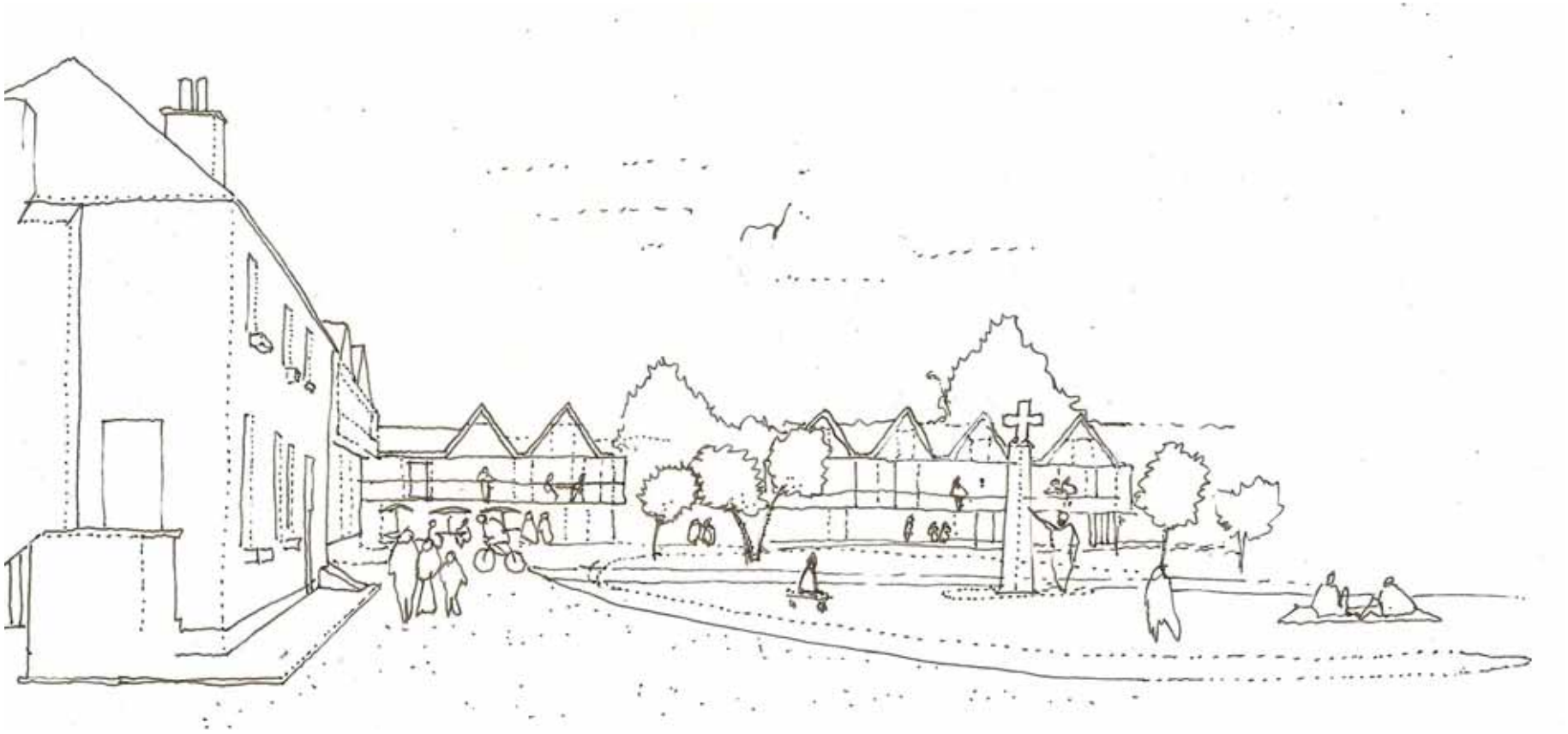
View across village green from north



project plan 09 - village green

9.03 Proposal Budget Allowances

REMOVAL OF EXISTING CAR PARK (Refer Project Plan 08)

PROPOSED VILLAGE GREEN

Removals - clear sleeper walls and vegetation	£ 4,500
Removals - existing paths, signs and furniture	£ 2,000
New roadside edgings	£ 3,500
Strip, re-grade and topsoil from heaps	£ 14,000
Turf	£ 21,000
New paths	£ 25,500
Setting to War Memorial	£ 3,000
Signs, furniture	£ 6,000
Pine tree planting (re-using existing where possible)	£ 5,000
12 months maintenance	£ 2,300
Design Fees @ 12% of construction cost	£ 17,500
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 1,500
Design/Site Contingency	£ 8,000
total	£ 172,000

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs

Note: Some cost savings could be made combining the contract with the removal of the existing car park.

9.04 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding would be part of an overall bid from a capital funds programme.

Timing

It would provide a positive message for Reculver and a catalyst for private sector investment in the frontage projects for the village green improvements to follow immediately behind the removal of the existing car park.

Subject to funding the village green could be constructed in two main phases:

Phase 1 - Removal of the existing car park as part of Project Plan 08 and restoration of the ground to create a larger central space.

Phase 2 - Removal and re-modelling of edges, new paths, terracing and turfing to whole new space.

Implementation Sequence

- CCC to appoint consultants to develop scheme for planning submission
- Conclude funding/scope discussions
- Assuming planning granted CCC to instruct consultants to progress to tender
- Appoint contractor

SUMMARY POINTS

- Critical catalyst public sector project as part of overal hub improvements and to encourage private sector investment in frontages
- Responds to concerns from local businesses on visibility and current state of green
- Provides a more usable space for visitors to play, picnic and relax
- Creates a real focus to Reculver's hub, improving the setting of the Towers, visitor centre, the surrounding businesses and the coastal edge.

playground

Project Summary:

A new themed play area between the Village Green and Visitor Centre.

The project would answer concerns about lack of visitor attractions raised by local businesses and add a family focused activity in the hub.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH-EAST COASTAL STRATEGY

- Raise educational aspiration

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

- *R13: Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY

- Develop new facilities and attractions
- Use innovative interpretation & technology to make heritage accessible to all
- Improve local distinctiveness

CANTERBURY DISTRICT COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- Maintain green, clean, safe and active public spaces
- Provide better services for children and young people

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

- *Objective 1: To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 2: Achieve national standards of excellence*
- *Objective 3: To involve the community in the management of the country park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *providing high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *co-ordinate management of the area bringing together public and private interest*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*

Proposed location

10.01 Current Position

There are no public play facilities currently in Reculver. Throughout the consultation process many of the local businesses and the Kent Wildlife Trust raised the issue of lack of 'park' attractions that many visitors expect to see and a plyground was considered to be one of the best ways of encouraging more families to visit.

10.02 Proposal Description

This would be a new visitor facility at Reculver and has the potential to enhance the experience greatly for children. If designed innovatively and linked in with the work of the visitor centre then the play element can be used to explain or touch on other themes of the site such as sustainability, environment, wildlife and history. It would be a missed opportunity if a standard toddlers playground were installed. However, it is also important to make the play areas fun and attractive to children yet robust enough to cope with the demands of the coastal location and possible abuse by older children.

Some of the initial ideas/themes are as follows:

- Kinetic Sculptures: use of moving sculptures that use renewable energy technology or simply interact with wind or rain.
- Roman or Saxon themes for equipment or a reconstruction of a Roman Fort
- Wildlife
- Bouncing Bomb/aircraft
- Coastal/marine

Elements of the playground for the youngest children will require a boundary enclosure. Design of this and the materials used for surfaces and equipment should be complementary to the other elements of the site. Any planning application required as part of the proposal should include a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment.

project plan 10 - playground

Kinetic sculptures - sun

Wildlife themes

Reculver history themes

Coastal marine themes

10.03 Proposal Budget Allowances

PLAYGROUND

Clearance and excavation	£ 12,500
Edging	£ 2,500
Safety surface	£ 21,500
Equipment x 2 (standard)	£ 10,000
Features x 3 (bespoke)	£ 45,000
Perimeter fencing and gates	£ 7,500
Furniture and signage	£ 3,000
Design Fees @ 15% of construction cost	£ 15,000
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 1,000
Design/Site Contingency	£ 11,000
total	£ 130,000

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs
- no allowance for water play features (assume a min addition of £80k)

10.04 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding would be part of an overall bid from a capital funds programme.

Timing

Phase 2 of the masterplan - 2 to 5 years depending on funding

Implementation Sequence

There is no critical path but the project is naturally linked to the new car park and village green projects and there may be savings in construction cost if they were implemented concurrently.

- CCC to appoint consultants to develop scheme for planning submission
- Conclude funding discussions
- Assuming planning granted CCC to instruct consultants to progress to tender
- Appoint contractor

SUMMARY POINTS

- New facility / attraction as part of overall hub improvements
- Education and learning potential
- Non-standard equipment to provide distinction and attraction appeal.

frontage development

Project Summary:

Construction of a series of new buildings facing on to Reculver Lane to replace existing poor quality buildings. This is to improve the quality of building stock facing onto the proposed village green, to provide new accommodation types and to develop existing and new businesses.

All of these buildings are proposed on private land and would be developed by the private sector. Therefore, this project plan is intended as a development brief to encourage and guide the private sector developer as part of the overall masterplan.

Strategic Objectives:

LOCAL PLAN POLICY R13
- *Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*

NATURAL EAST KENT
- *Development of green tourism destination*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- *Encourage rural regeneration*
- *Encourage local visitors and VFR market*

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN
- *Objective 1:To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 3:To involve the community in the management of the country park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *providing high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *co-ordinate management of the area bringing together public and private interests*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*

Existing cafe, shop, arcades and Reculver club

Existing buildings/play area on King Ethelbert site

Existing static caravans opposite visitor centre

11.01 Current Position

- single storey buildings with poor appearance facing on to Reculver Lane
- all buildings/sites in private ownership - 3 different owners
- cafe/shop/arcades not prospering as businesses and not attracting use by visitors
- Reculver club for use by waterways residents
- King Ethelbert former tea shop now used as storage
- the King Ethelbert site is within the boundaries of the conservation area and the scheduled ancient monument and so will be subject to much stricter planning controls

11.02 Proposal Description/Development Brief

The proposal is to encourage development by the private sector of new buildings facing onto Reculver Lane. A series of 2-3 storey buildings with a common architectural palette with business usage at ground level and short term holiday let accommodation above is believed to be appropriate from a masterplanning point of view.

Possible business use classes could be A1 (shops), A3 (food and drink). C1 (hotels and hostels), D1 (non-residential institutions) and D2 (Assembly and Leisure). Class B1 could be considered, although it is less likely to directly support the wider aims of the main masterplan unless linked to tourism or regeneration. However, it may be useful if it enables the business case to be workable and progress the overall development.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out through Canterbury City Council. This suggests that the type of development indicated is feasible although further detail work would be required to gain Environment Agency approval (any planning application would need to be accompanied a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment, to comply with part C of the Exception Test, as outlined in Planning Policy Statement 25). This may be a special case where regeneration objectives can be used to offset potential issues relating to flood risk. The key points are as follows:

- 'vulnerable' use classes as defined in PPS25 may be possible if supporting a key regional strategy
- ground floor levels should be 2.8m AOD minimum - note potential access issues
- no sleeping accommodation should be on the ground floor
- other flood mitigation measures will need to be considered and incorporated such as flood proofing details, flood warning, management of water runoff, land raising.

Reference should be made to the Flood Risk Assessment for Reculver by Herrington Consulting Ltd March 2008 for further detail on these issues.

The external form, materials, quality of design and detailing of the new buildings will be fundamental to the success of the masterplan objectives. The buildings are a key element in creating a 'sense of place' in the centre of Reculver. They must have a strong relationship with the village green and offer activity to the public realm through the usage and design.

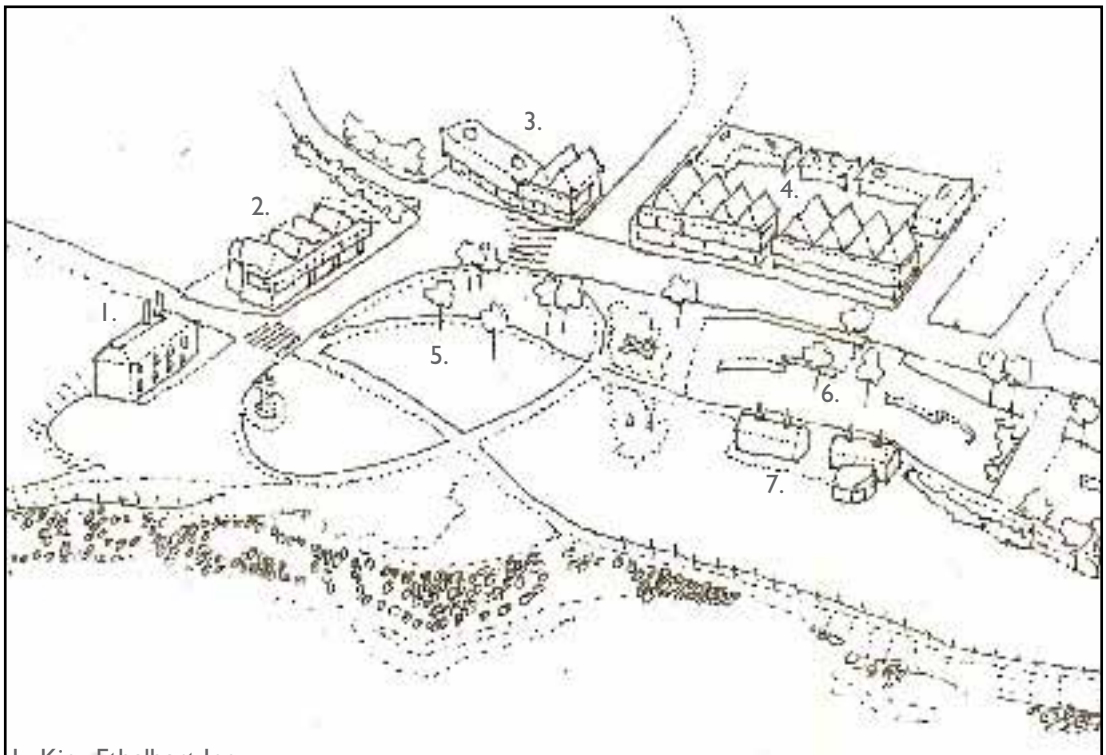
Car parking allocated to these buildings should be at the rear and access points should be carefully sited.

The materials should be appropriate for the location and be sensitive to the historic setting and qualities of the Reculver Towers, the King Ethelbert Inn and the original elements of the Blue Dolphin. General recommendations for conservation areas would be appropriate in this area (eg UPVC windows/ cladding should be not be used) although a sensitive contemporary approach would be recommended. In line with Policy CC8 of the South East Plan, green infrastructure including green roofs should be considered.

A level of public activity at the ground floor level is essential and the streetscape design must be co-ordinated with other areas such as Reculver Lane and the village green. Balconies, canopies, glazed facades and carefully designed signage could further enhance the appearance and attractiveness of the buildings and the positive regeneration they promote.

It would be appropriate for the development to be carried out in phases as clearly the success of the businesses etc will be tied to a robust business plan. The Reculver Partnership (see project plan 02) would be a useful vehicle to help co-ordinate the proposals in an informed and responsive manner., tying them in with the wider masterplan. Some initial cost feasibility work has been explored in project plan 06 but would need developing in detail.

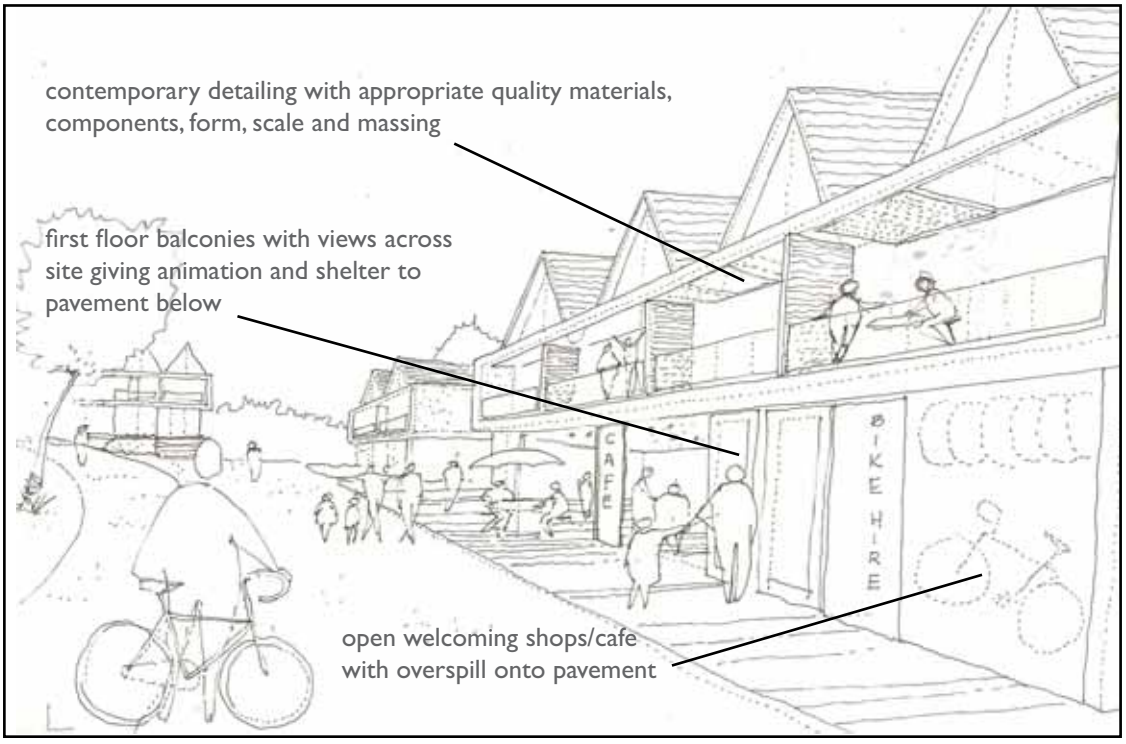
It is envisaged that a variety of units could be provided with different facilities responding to the general need for visitor facilities as well as market niches. Flexibility in the design for future changes in market trends should be a critical element of the design brief.



1. King Ethelbert Inn
2. New development on King Ethelbert land with business/holiday usage
3. New development of business/holiday usage on site of cafe/shop/arcade
4. New development of business/holiday usage on site of arcade/reculver club
5. Village green
6. Car park
7. Visitor centre

Masterplan phase 2 proposals

Site plan in relation to wider masterplan


contemporary detailing with appropriate quality materials, components, form, scale and massing
first floor balconies with views across site giving animation and shelter to pavement below
open welcoming shops/cafe with overspill onto pavement
CAFE
BIKE HIRE

Proposed view looking east along Reculver Lane

lively attractive cafe with weather protection

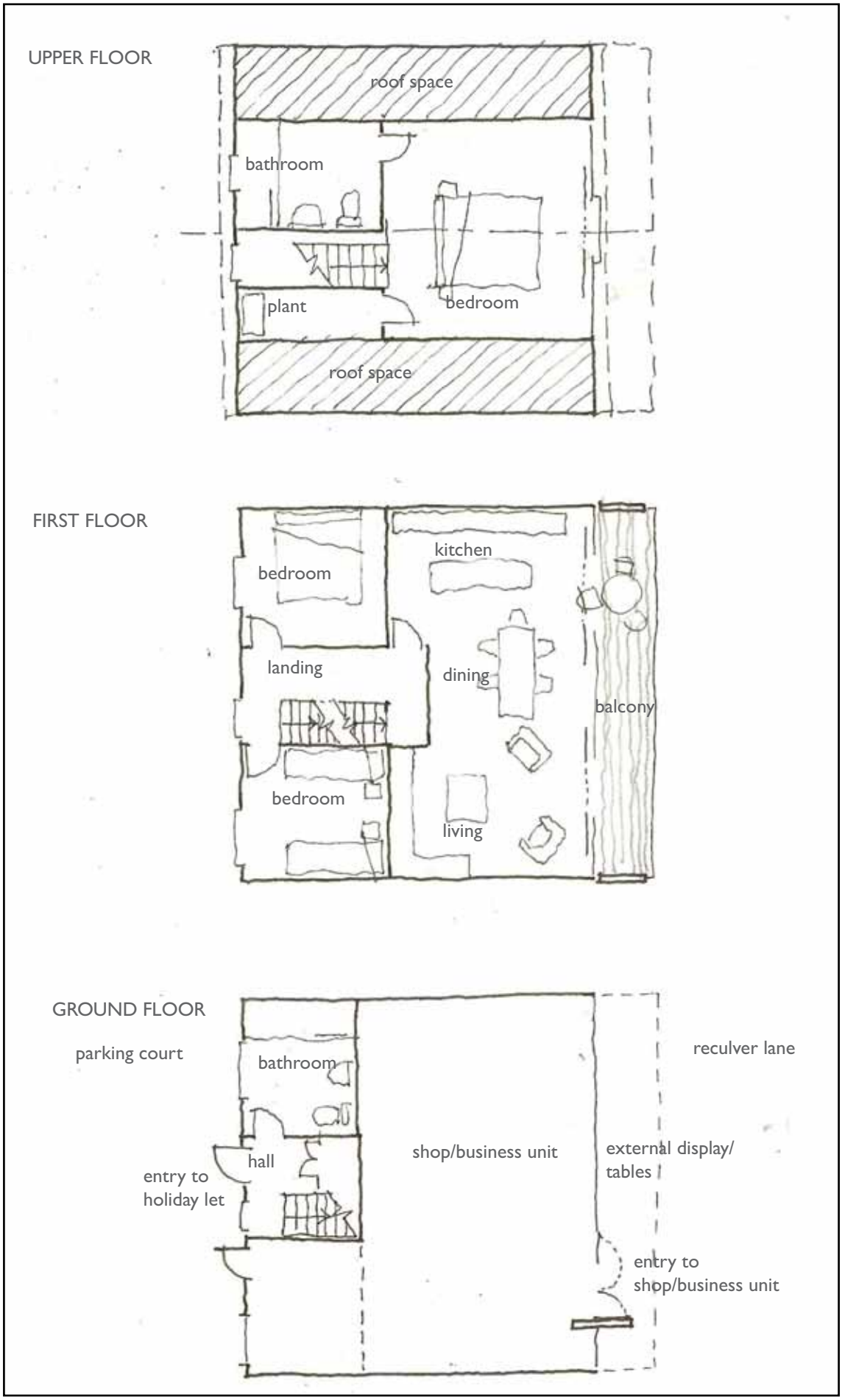
new business opportunities

Innovative coastal architecture

Strong form to create sense of place

Animation at upper floors facing village green

Co-ordinated signage, graphics and lighting



Feasibility sketch plan of typical unit

11.03 Proposal Budget Allowances

These are intended only as a very rough guide and could vary greatly depending upon the area constructed, level of specification, usage and site abnormals. Read in association with Project Plan 02 and 06.

King Ethelbert Site

Demolitions/Site Clearance	£ 15,000
Construction costs say 4 units @ 100sqm @£1200/sqm	£ 480,000
Construction costs - External works	£ 25,000
Design Fees @ 12% of construction cost	£ 60,600
Other Fees and Expenses - surveys, planning etc	£ 15,000
Design/Site Contingency	£ 40,000
FFE for holiday lets	£ 6,000
total	£ 641,600

Waterways/Shop/Cafe/Arcades Site

Demolitions/Site Clearance	£ 40,000
Construction costs say 10 units @ 100sqm @£1200/sqm	£1,200,000
Construction costs end unit 200sqm @ £1200/sqm	£ 240,000
Construction costs - External works	£ 50,000
Design Fees @ 12% of construction cost	£ 178,800
Other Fees and Expenses - surveys, planning etc	£ 30,000
Design/Site Contingency	£ 100,000
FFE for holiday lets	£ 18,000
total	£1,856,800

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance for business fit out costs - assumed by lessee
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- alterations/rebuilding of waterways club/admin etc not included

11.04 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Private sector funding

Timing

As it requires investment from the private sector to develop this project it is difficult to control timing. However, subject to market conditions the aim of the masterplan would be to complete this element during Phase 2, ie 2 - 5 years.

Implementation Sequence

- Encourage further detailed interaction with existing business owners through Reculver Partnership
- Developers to develop business models and design briefs
- Early Consultations with Environment Agency and CCC Planning
- Developers to employ consultants to draw up feasibility schemes based on masterplan principles
- Prepare planning applications
- Detail design, tender and construction

Contingency Plan

- In the event that prevailing market conditions/business models cause the concept to not be feasible then a co-ordinated review of the frontage 'area' should be carried out. Alternative lower cost improvements through refurbishment/recladding/landscaping could be explored in order to progress some level of visual improvement to the centre of Reculver. The Reculver Co-ordinator could drive this process through the Reculver Partnership.

SUMMARY POINTS

- critical private sector project to enhance Reculver as a destination through visual and facility improvements
- flood risk assessment carried out to assist developers
- key element within Reculver Partnership's role to encourage this development
- development independent of village green/car park etc - no critical linkage

caravanning & camping club

Project Summary:

Working in partnership with the leaseholders, The Camping and Caravan Club, and using planning powers as required, to ensure the proposed improvements add value to the green tourism approach, secure wider environmental gains and act as an exemplar to the other caravan sites.

Strategic Objectives:

LOCAL PLAN
- *R13: Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*
- *BE14: Protection and enhancement of the SAM and archaeological interest*

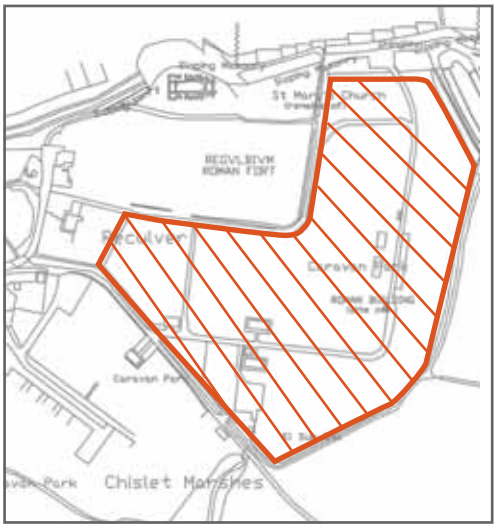
NATURAL EAST KENT
- *Development of green tourism destination*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- *Encourage rural regeneration*
- *Develop new infrastructure, facilities and attractions*
- *Include partners in tourism*

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN
- *Objective 1:To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 2:To achieve national standards of excellence for the country park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *providing high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths*
- *co-ordinating the management of the area bringing together public and private interests*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*



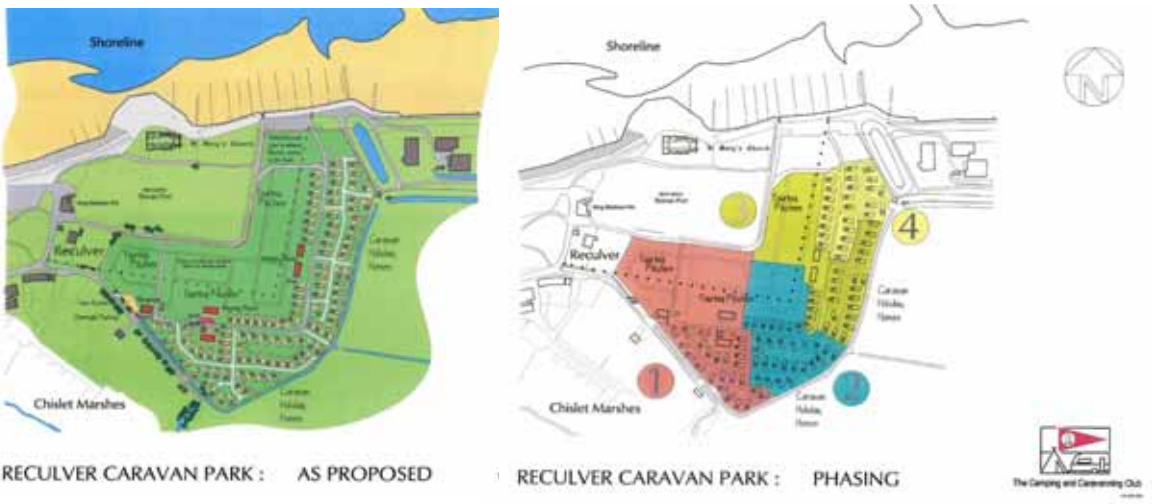
The Council owned caravan site

12.01 Current Position

This Council owned caravan site has recently been leased by the Caravanning and Camping Club who aim to make significant investment in the site. Although change is now on the way the caravan site has comprised many dilapidated static caravans and has been associated locally with anti-social behaviour.

The site itself has a high visual profile and a direct relationship with the historic towers as well as sea views and views across West Wantsum.

View south-east from Roman Fort footpath



Caravanning and Camping Club outline proposals

Masterplan extract showing some minor modifications to CCC proposals

'Alternative' static caravans would support the green tourism approach, open up new visiotr markets and help to create local distinctiveness

12.02 Proposal Description

As for the visitor centre, the Caravanning and Camping Club site is a catalyst to the regeneration of Reculver and a critical opportunity. The current Caravanning and Camping Club proposals replace existing static caravans only on the eastern and southern edges. The area adjacent to the SAM is proposed for tents and touring caravan pitches, users of which are considered to contribute more to the local economy than statics.

To support the masterplan's principle of promoting 'green tourism', the higher visibility of the site and the reputation of the Caravan and Camping Club suggests a real opportunity for experimental accommodation types such as fixed camping 'pods'. Alternatively examples of classic caravan types and/or future caravan design prototypes could be showcased to draw on the long history of caravanning at Reculver. The optimum site for this would be at the north as a buffer between the 'standard' caravans and the public routes.

Treatment of the north and western edges should be carefully designed. Retention of existing vegetation would be advantageous if acceptable to English Heritage. Excavation of one of the Roman ditches would give a greater separation from the Environment Agency Road/Cycle route and open up a further avenue of historic interpretation. The area between the site fence and the sea wall needs a positive treatment while retaining the access point. A zone of vegetated shingle would soften the appearance and give a clearer definition of the pedestrian/cycle route and greater privacy to the camp site.

Further environmental improvements to the site access road, such as the removal of telegraph poles and tidying of verges, may also be secured through development of the site. In addition the proposals for touring caravans, whilst supported due to their potential positive impact on the local economy, will add to the difficulties experienced on Reculver Lane, and some contribution to passing places should be considered.

Sketch of view along Roman Fort edge - showing interpretation of wall, new boundary to caravan site with re-creation of Roman ditch and open edge, touring pitches and alternative static 'pods'.

12.03 Proposal Budget Allowances

The general improvements to the caravan site will be paid for and implemented by the Caravanning and Camping Club as part of their existing proposals.

The additional 'added value' items that are considered critical to the site being seen as a catalyst for change are as follows. The budget costs are for general guidance as further design work and negotiations with the CCC on their contributions will need to be conducted.

Additional Items

Static 'pods' (each): CCC to advise based on their Cumbria scheme	
Fort edges (Interp, Roman ditch and boundary, 280m)	£ 17,500
Eastern boundary - screen planting on and off site (4000sqm)	£ 32,000
Access road improvements	£ 20,000
Reculver Lane contribution	£ 7,000

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs

12.04 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding to be secured from negotiation with and/or Section 106 agreement with Caravanning and Camping Club with gap funding from Canterbury City Council capital budgets.

Timing

It is understood that the Caravanning and Camping Club are due to submit a planning application in 2010 and are proposing a 4 phase programme of improvements.

Implementation Sequence

Canterbury to continue to discuss and negotiate added value elements through the planning application process.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Critical catalyst private sector project
- Early implementation possible to support vision for the country park
- Added value elements include:
  - Alternative accommodation types
  - Interpretation of archaeology
  - Boundary improvements and creation of Roman ditch
  - Indigenous screen planting to east
  - Access road improvements

heritage improvements

Project Summary:

To significantly enhance the iconic status and tourism value of the Towers and the Roman Fort through innovative interpretation and improved intellectual and physical access.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH-EAST COASTAL STRATEGY
- *Raise educational attainment and aspiration*
- *Create cultural change to bring back civic pride*

LOCAL PLAN
- *R13: Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*
- *BE14: Protecting and enhancing the heritage*
- *BE7: Enhancing the Conservation Area*

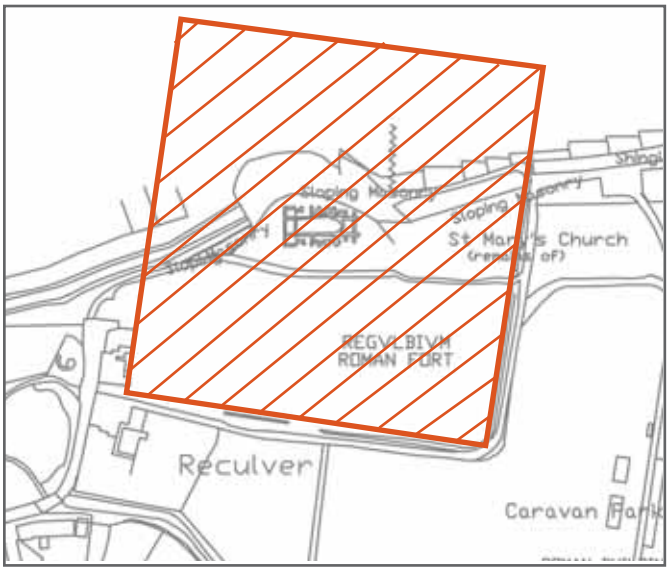
NATURAL EAST KENT
- *Development of green tourism destination*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- *Develop new attractions*
- *Use innovative interpretation and technology to make the heritage accessible to all*
- *Protect and improve heritage and local distinctiveness*
- *Include local people and partners in tourism*

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN
- *Objective 1:To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 2:To achieve national standards of excellence for the Country Park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *improved wayfinding and access*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths*
- *coordinate management bringing together public and private interests*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*



Location and extent of original Roman Fort

13.01 Current Position

The Late-Norman Towers are the key attraction and draw for visitors and provide Reculver with its unique identity. The Towers are owned by English Heritage.

However, during consultation with local businesses it was clear that there is some level of concern with English Heritage's commitment to the Towers due to the perceived lack of maintenance, access and interpretation which is considered to reduce the amount of visitors and their length of stay.

The Roman Fort appears to be generally less well known and recognised for what it once was and there seems a lack of understanding that much of it has disappeared due to coastal erosion. The perimeter Roman wall is in also in poor condition and the grassed top provides little interest and is little used.

The Towers with the Roman wall in foreground

The grassed top to the fort - provides little interest and interpretation for visitors

Extract from masterplan - showing improved interpretation of the seaward extent of the Fort and its original layout.

13.02 Proposal Descriptions

There are a number of proposals for this element based around the desire to increase access and interpretation of the historic monument. Some will be permanent while others could be temporary as an event or an arts installation over a season.

Access to the Towers

Developing the experience and accessibility of going up the Towers is a key project. Even though the Towers are not particularly high the process of climbing up and seeing the views of the rest of the site and beyond is a specific draw to visitors. Interpretation within the Towers themselves and opening up new views by changing the current acrylic window panels to a clear and maintainable window will greatly improve the experience. Some simple safety modifications would also allow a lower intensity of staffing which currently restricts opening to once a year. Key aims are:

1: Increase public access into and up Towers on Easter to Summer school holidays possibly increasing this to all seasonal weekends if successful. A small charge will be required to cover paid local staff and/or volunteer costs. Physical improvements will be subject to a more detail survey of the Towers but will include:

- Improved but sympathetic security at ground floor;
- Replace acrylic window covers with bespoke windows, hinged to allow cleaning of outside glass;
- Sympathetic edge restraints on the external parapets to allow safe access to views;
- Access information regarding numbers of steps etc for disabled persons and for those with children; and,
- Consider floodlighting to east facing side to highlight from Margate.

13.02 Proposal Descriptions continued..

2. Improve interpretation and understanding of the Towers:

- Improved management of the Towers to enable physical and educational access - possibly through a Friends group with assistance from English Heritage and Canterbury City Council;
- Return of the Reculver Columns and other artefacts back to the site from museums and/or Canterbury Cathedral;
- Use the above as the focus of a small exhibition in the ground floor of the Towers;
- Smaller interpretation boards at first and second storey showing how the views across the Wantsum have changed; and,
- Telescope to view the surroundings, possibly including Richborough Castle.

Interpretation of the Fort and History of the Reculver Towers Site

More explanation of the actual fort, what lies beneath and out to sea could again be a key draw to visitors. Whilst interpretation options should be further formulated with English Heritage the key ideas which met with a positive response in consultation with them were:

- Identification of the fort layout and five major Roman buildings on the ground through non-invasive landscape treatment and/or more exposure of the Roman buildings;
- Reconstruction images from key viewpoints to link the remains to the original geography of the area;
- Further information on the cycle route around the Roman wall at the perimeter.
- Restoration of the wall to prevent further erosion (see also Project Plans 12 and16 - improvements to the Roman Wall footpath and re-creation of Roman ditch following archaeological excavations;
- Restore the East and South Gates and clear the fort wall of intrusive vegetation.
- Re-excavate the unique corn drying oven on the east caravan site.
- Excavate short lengths of two defensive ditches close to the corn drying oven.
- Create a exhibition for archeological finds and interpretation in conjunction with the Phase 3/4 Visitor Centre (Refer PP07)
- An artwork, graphic installation, possibly promoted through a design ideas competition to raise further awareness of the site, for interpretating the original extent of the fort, buildings and history of erosion. This could include placing a series of markers out to sea and could be formed in many different ways. Similar ideas have been explored at Dunwich, a submerged village in Suffolk through the 'Waterlog' project.
- Interpretation of the Palace of Reculver built by King Ethelbert of Kent and links with Canterbury.

Given the potential for such an installation to result in significant effects on the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay SPA, and other European coastal sites, if it were to be pursued as an option particular consideration will need to be given to visual disturbance, the effects of the structures on coastal processes and the risk of a pollution incident affecting the marine environment. The proposed design and location of any art work will be agreed in consultation with Natural England. Only an art installation that can be demonstrated to have no impact on the integrity of a European Site either alone or acting in combination will be supported.

The more interesting and educational remains at Richborough Castle

13.02 Proposal Descriptions continued...

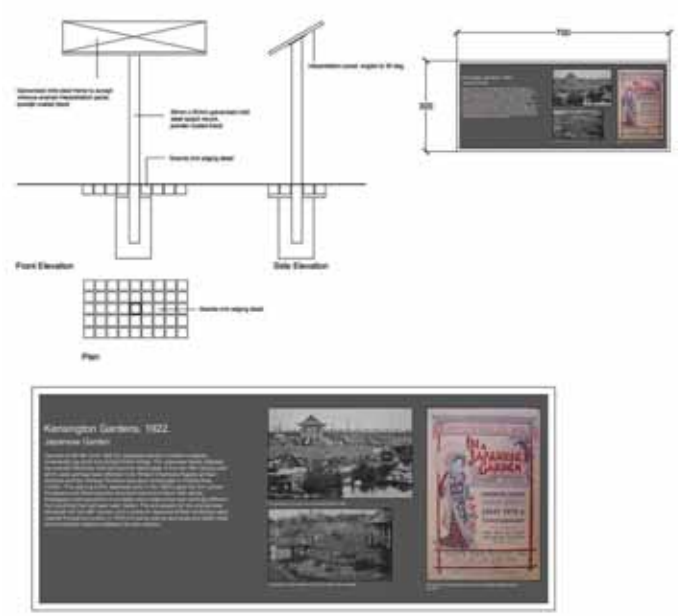
Events and promotion

More explanation of the actual fort, what lies beneath and out to sea could again be a key draw to visitors. Whilst interpretation options should be further formulated with English Heritage the key ideas which met with a positive response in consultation with them were:

- Events are planned by the country park and these continue to raise awareness of the site and its heritage. Not all however have been very successful and consideration needs to be given to perhaps just one major event a year or every other year where greater emphasis can be made on all aspects of the site and the park. A weekend of events including re-enactment battle groups, dambuster flyovers, wildlife walks, open day of the Towers and market stalls may be better than spreading these attractions too thinly over the year. Refer also to Proejct Plans 03, 04 and 05.
- Promotion to the public of any planned archaeological excavations or research - possibly as part of the visitor centre's exhibition; and,
- Extension of an arts brief to include temporary installations highlighting aspects of the heritage.

Re-enactment events

More access inside the Towers



Increase in interpretation boards

13.03 Proposal Budget Allowances

ACCESS & INTERPRETATION TO TOWERS

Doors and security - budget	£ 5,000
Windows	£ 8,000
Edge restraints	£ 6,500
Access information	£ 500
Floodlighting to east face	£ 12,000
Miscellaneous internal	£ 10,000
Exhibition and interpretation - budget	£ 25,000
Design Fees @ 19% of construction cost	£ 13,000
Design/Site Contingency	£ 8,000
total	£ 88,000

INTERPRETATION OF FORT

Fort layout (minimal intervention grass inserts & mowing)	£ 10,000
Reconstruction images and interp boards	£ 8,000
Restoration of wall - budget	£ 30,000
Restoration of East and South Gates	£ 15,000
Excavation of corn drying oven and defence ditches	£ 3,000
Art competition and budget for installation	£ 50,000
Design Fees @ 12% of construction cost	£ 12,000
Design/Site Contingency	£ 11,000
total	£ 139,000

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs
- no allowance for events budge

13.04 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding could be a contributory package from English Heritage and Canterbury City Council with some wider interpretation costs possible coming via an overall bid for capital funds. Specific DDA access improvements in the Towers may be available also from CCC.

Timing

Phase 1 - Subject to discussions with English Heritage, funding and planning permission the project could be developed in tandem with general environmental improvements and interpretation projects through the site by late spring 2009.

Implementation Sequence

- CCC to head up and organise a working group in partnership with English Heritage to develop the ideas and the funding package.
- Involve and establish a Friends Group with EH volunteers and local businesses.
- Conclude funding/scope discussions
- Appoint design consultants
- Development of co-ordinated design
- Attain consents
- Detail design/tender/construction
- Assuming planning granted CCC to instruct consultants to progress to tender
- Appoint contractor

SUMMARY POINTS

- enhances the iconic status of the Towers, maximising the assets of the site
- responds to local business's criticisms
- will increase visitor numbers and length of stay
- supports emphasis on green tourism and education

The maximum potential extent of managed realignment will need to be explored further during the SMP review process as this would significantly reduce discharge capacity during flood events. The Rushbourne Wall may be an alternative appropriate line of maximum retreat, as this would make use of the existing wall, thus reducing the need for additional defences, and would also allow the North Stream and Chislet Pump Channels to continue to function.

west wantsum

Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)

The Isle of Grain to South Foreland Shoreline Management Plan currently sets a policy to 'hold the line' in the short term (0-20 years – until at least 2028) for the Reculver to Minnis Bay section of coast and 'managed realignment' for the medium term (20-50 years) and long term (50-100 years).

The Reculver Masterplan seeks to make an assessment of the existing policies relating to Reculver but **does not seek to further develop the SMP process itself**. (Development of the SMP will be via the SMP process and its outcomes, and not through the Reculver Masterplan).

SMP policy

The Reculver Masterplan project area is split into 3 parts under the SMP (refer to policy, Vol 1, 3.8)

From Herne Bay to Bishopstone Manor (4a12 of the SMP) the policy is to hold the line to protect the Herne Bay seafront, property, infrastructure, amenity and other urban assets along this section of the coast.

Reculver Country Park (4a13 of the SMP) refers to the eroding cliffs west of the Blue Dolphin to Bishopstone Lane, which are of high conservation, landscape and recreational importance. The long-term recommendation is to allow continued erosion of the cliffs, which will maintain the geological exposures and landscape quality of the frontage.

West Wantsum (4a14 of the SMP) includes properties, local industries, footpaths, agricultural land and freshwater habitats. The short-term policy is 'hold the line' by maintaining and upgrading defences and management practices, despite anticipated ongoing sea level rise and limited feed of beach building material. The short-term policy is also to develop a more sustainable approach to intensive beach maintenance at Coldharbour. In the medium and long term (in excess of 20 up to 100 years) the plan is to realign the defences east of Reculver Towers, allowing the shoreline to retreat in a controlled manner, under a policy of managed realignment. No specific realignment 'line' has been defined but a maximum extent has been identified (see map). Managed realignment assumes the construction of a secondary seawall to prevent the risk of large scale flooding to backing hinterland, and to protect the railway line, the A299 Thanet Way and the residential area in Boyden Gate and Marshside. In the long term the realigned defences will require appropriate periodic maintenance.

At Reculver Towers and the small section of coast west to the Blue Dolphin, the plan is to continue managing the erosion and flood risks, under a policy of 'Hold the line'. This will maintain the international heritage assets and manage the risk of inundation. Reculver Towers will remain defended for as long as is technically, financially and environmentally viable.

For a full description of the policies of the SMP, please refer to the SMP.

Managed realignment issues yet to be fully considered for future implementation of SMP policy

The SMP recognises that realignment in the West Wantsum area could involve the loss of built assets; namely residential properties, tourist facilities, local industries (such as the oyster farm), agricultural land, saline lagoons, freshwater habitats and potentially unknown buried heritage. Realignment would however, create a coast that will help to negate the effects of coastal squeeze and create important brackish and saline habitats.

Consultation for the Reculver Masterplan resulted in the raising of concerns about a number of issues relating to potential managed realignment and changed management of the Coldharbour Lagoon area, that will, in time, need to be fully and properly considered as an outcome of, or as part of, the SMP review process. These consultation comments are summarised as:

- ·Further study into the shoreline's response to managed realignment, the scale of realignment, amount of sea level rise, future supply of sediment, and impact of changes in sediment supply to adjacent areas

- Requirement for wide-ranging and detailed consultation and approval from landowners, statutory organisations including Thanet District Council and other stakeholders

- Provisions needed to allow for development/amendment of connected walking and cycling routes in accordance with Natural East Kent and Kent County Council's (KCC) Countryside Access Service (CAS) and Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP) policies D3 and K7 (see policy section 3.0, vol 1), in particular affecting the route from Birchington to Reculver and using the Viking Trail

- Assessment of potential adverse effects to farming businesses, and to productive arable land, of capital land value loss of up to 500 acres (200 hectares) of high yielding arable land, including long term consequences of land loss, reduced crop yield and environmental impacts of the need to import an equal volume of lost product

- Detailed planning for a secondary defence and the required capital investment to protect the railway line and land beyond the River Wantsum to Sandwich. Estimated costs of this work will need to be established and published in order for a comprehensive assessment to be made in respect of viability of this proposal. Liability for these costs will need to be established

- Consideration of the impact of the re-location of the existing Coldharbour Lagoon, and necessary measures to improve sea defence in this location (due to the lack of revetment (concrete apron) either side of the existing lagoon, making this a comparatively weak section of the existing coastal defence)

- Consideration of the potential level of water level rise, and the method and exact location of breaching the sea defences, in detail sufficient to establish potential effects on the remainder of the Chislet marshes, properties and infrastructure

- Consideration of the costs, viability and liability of constructing a new pumping station and improvements to the main watercourses and water level control structures to manage upstream water levels and flood risk. (Currently the Reculver Pumping Station, alongside Northmouth Sluice, pumps water from the Chislet Pump Channel and is used to reduce levels in the North Stream, when it is tide locked, in order to minimise flooding to the Boyden Gate and Marshside residential areas)

- Consideration, protection and/or mitigation, of the impact of raising water levels on upstream water levels and flood risk, in particular to the River Wantsum, North Stream and Chislet Pump Channel watercourses, that run through the West Wantsum area, and the three Internal Drainage Board maintained watercourses, the Reculver Lead Dyke (IDB133), Rushbourne Wall Lead Dyke (IDBl34) and Twelve Foot Dyke (IDB 136). (These watercourses receive and convey water from the Chislet Marshes, including the residential areas of Boyden Gate and Marshside. There are approximately 40-50 properties in close proximity to the North Stream)

- Provision for freshwater discharge to prevent fluvial flooding from the Wantsum, Sarre Penn, North Stream, Brooksend Stream and Wademarsh Stream

- Detailed assessment of impacts on the existing local and wider environment, flora and fauna, including consideration of impacts upon existing freshwater habitats in the Chislet Marshes, saline lagoons, and other coastal habitats. Consideration is likely to be via a process of Environmental Impact Assessment.

Connectivity of walking and cycling routes needs to be considered as part of any developed plans for managed realignment.

- There is a need to note that if there is managed retreat to the east as a result of implementation of the mid-long term policies of the Shoreline Management Plan, then the cycling link from Birchington will be lost and should be relocated. This will require joined up working with Thanet to keep the Viking Coastal Trail.

Managed Realignment is, at present, indicative only

The Shoreline Management Plan is the leading document for coastal defence and a substantial component in coastal flood protection strategies. Whilst these mid-to-long-term policies may in future be proved to be appropriate, further detail is required. The SMP and the Reculver Masterplan acknowledge the fact that significant further detailed studies will need to be completed before final decisions about policy implementation can be taken.

The Reculver Masterplan acknowledges the SMP process of regularly revising existing policy, potentially resulting in abandonment of the current medium to long term managed realignment policy. SMPs are reviewed on a regular basis, currently in the order of every ten years. More detailed studies will be carried out as part of the scheduled SMP reviews. The Environment Agency will also take a strategic approach to long-term management of the coast, over time undertaking more detailed studies about how management of the coast could be developed in a sustainable way.

The role of the Masterplan is to assess the interrelation between existing long-term policies and the nature of the site, to be revised and updated as these policies change - considering potential impacts in accordance with the other restrictions and priorities pertinent to the area, including food production, threat of flooding and conservation management. Without acknowledging these interests on the site we would not be properly considering the Masterplan area.

Project Summary:

Arising from the Shoreline Management Plan's proposal for 'managed coastal retreat' in this area this is a long term project for the creation of a new nationally recognised and managed wetland habitat as a major extension to the country ppark. Attracting a wide range of bird species and enhancing the existing conservation designations West Wantsum has the potential to become a significant focus for the growth of a new 'green tourism' market.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH-EAST COASTAL STRATEGY

- Supporting business and regeneration
- Raising educational attainment and aspiration
- Creating cultural change

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

- *R13: Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*
- *NE1: Enhances SSSI and SPA*
- *C36: Protects and enhamces the undeveloped coast*
- *R7: Enhances the Area of High Landscape Value*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY

- Developing new facilities and attractions
- Encouraging responsible tourism
- Protecting and improving local distinctiveness;
- Including local people in tourism

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

- *Objective 1: To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 3: To involve the community in the management of the country park*
- *Objective 4: To manage the country park sustainably*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

Overview objective:
'To develop Reculver as a high quality regional hub for green tourism and education'

- *providing high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *improved wayfinding and access*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths such as SSSI and coastal location*
- *co-ordinate management of the area bringing together public and private interest*
- *establish clear linkages to the surrounding area and the wider regional context*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*

Isle of Grain to South Foreland Shoreline Management Plan
Policy Unit 4a 14: Reculver Towers to Minnis Bay - Map 1

Policy

From Present Day:	Medium-Term:	Long-Term:
Hold the Line	Managed Realignment & Hold the Line	Managed Realignment & Hold the Line

Erosion Lines

- 0-20 year erosion
- 20-50 year erosion
- 50-100 year erosion
- Current shoreline
- Hold the Line (0-100 years)
- Policy Unit Boundary
- Potential continuous long-term realignment option
- 2005 Indicative floodplain © Environment Agency
- Defence Structure

Environmental/Cultural Heritage

- National Nature Conservation Designation
- International and National Nature Conservation Designation
- Important Heritage Sites (Scheduled Monuments)

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West Wantsum area -view east from the Fort

Plumpudding Lagoon

14.01 Current Position

The West Wantsum area is currently flat, drained, low-lying agricultural land protected from coastal flooding by the Northern Sea Wall and Rushbourne Counter Wall. The Oyster Hatchery lies in the north-west corner of the area and it is bounded to the south by the railway line.

The SSSI, Ramsar and SPA conservation designations abut the area to the north.

There is already good public access along the sea walls and on the west and east boundaries as part of the Wantsum Walk and there is some reported bird interest on the fields. There is also a small salt water lagoon, known as Coldharbour Lagoon, which is recognised by Natural England as being an important habitat but is threatened by erosion of the stone berm which protects it.

The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is the catalyst for this project which identifies a policy of possible ***Managed Realignment*** after 20 years or so, of the area east of the Northmouth Sluice (West Wantsum). The viability of the project will be entirely dependant on the implementation of SMP policy, and the exact timescale will depend on storm severity and damage and will mean a controlled retreat of parts of the shoreline and the probable requirement of secondary defences. The maximum area of retreat within the study area could be as far as up to the existing railway line.

Proposals for managed realignment will be supported within the vision of the Masterplan, provided that during construction or operation they will not result in any impact on the integrity of a European Site either alone or acting in combination. In developing an appropriate scheme particular consideration will need to be given the effects of managed realignment on coastal processes and the risk of a pollution incident affecting the marine environment.

The Environment Agency, RSPB and Natural England have provided their formal support that if managed realignment is progressed through the SMP, a West Wantsum wetlands creation scheme is in line with organisational aspirations for connected habitats, coastal wetland and improved public access to these habitats, and the Environment Agency's Regional Habitat Creation programme.

14.02 Proposal Description

In the short-medium term, as part of the Masterplan Phase 2, there is the potential to re-locate an enhanced Coldharbour Lagoon near to the existing lagoon and to provide some temporary bird hides on the existing public footpath network, especially overlooking the Oyster Hatchery, the owners of which have been consulted and are supportive of the proposals.

Subject to further consultation with statutory agencies and landowners a further series of interventions may take place in the existing landscape to improve bird habitat and further promote bird-watching. This would include improving access through better maintenance of existing pathways and the creation of new walkways and permanent hides. As for other parts of Reculver an increased level of interpretation on key routes is to be provided with information on the oyster hatchery and bird watching on the sea wall.

In the longer term, Masterplan Phase 4, a much larger scale development of a saltwater and reedbed marshland habitat could be enabled by the strategic change in the location of sea defences. This, directed by SMP policies, would take many years to develop, and should involve Thanet District Council, KWT, Environment Agency, Natural England, the River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board and RSPB.

The principle is that if managed retreat is to occur, it can be used to significantly widen existing rivers and ditches over the low lying land, and use the fill to make bunds and areas of higher ground. This has the potential to create a rich mosaic of habitats to attract a wide range of birds (especially waders and other wetland birds) with a network of hidden paths allowing peripheral access to all habitats, creating opportunities for public enjoyment of the bird reserve in the long term.

The proposal shows a network of raised paths, based largely on existing routes, and interlinked areas of open water including:

- Lowland scrub and coppice - on the west edge to create natural networks with the existing hedgerows and trees and to screen the caravan parks;
- Scrub - managed willow scrubland for dense bird habitat;
- Reedbeds - allowing some areas of water to be colonised for wetland species habitat; and,
- Saltmarsh - additional mud flats and tidal zone to attract waders.

This proposal would need to be assessed in detail as part of the assessment for the potential of managed realignment, and as such the proposal is subject to the outcome of such an assessment.

14.03 Biodiveristy Action Plans (BAP)

The project would also help deliver against the following habitat targets in the UK BAP:

- Coastal saltmarsh: Expansion (T2); Create by the year 2015, 3,600 ha of intertidal sediment habitat to offset historical losses of which [90%] should be in England and 10%] in Wales. This breaks down to: 40 ha/year for vegetated intertidal sediment and 200 ha/year for unvegetated intertidal sediment. (Cross-plan target with mudflats).

- Mudflats: Expansion (T2); Create by the year 2015, 3,600 ha of intertidal sediment habitat to offset historical losses of which [90%] should be in England and 10%] in Wales. This breaks down to:

- 40 ha/year for vegetated intertidal sediment and 200 ha/year for unvegetated intertidal sediment. (Cross-plan target with coastal saltmarsh).

- Saline lagoons: Maintaining extent (T1); There should be no further net loss in extent of saline lagoons, subject to natural change. Any loss due to anthropogenic pressures should be offset with habitat enhancement / creation.

- Saline lagoons: Expansion (T4); Create, by the year 2015, 120 ha of saline lagoon to offset estimated historical losses.

In addition, the BAP bumblebee, Bombus sylvarum, does occur on land at the western end of the country park, and would benefit from appropriate management of the project site, particularly if it led to creation of rough grassland with abundant bird's-foot trefoil and red clover. The BAP mining bee, Colletes halophilus, almost certainly occurs on the site, and would benefit from saltmarsh creation/ restoration that resulted in an increase in abundance of sea aster. Other BAP species may also be potential beneficiaries, as would the rare (non-BAP) hog's fennel, which occurs at Coldharbour.

14.04 Proposal Budget Allowances (post managed realignment)

PHASE 2a

Interpretation and signage	£ 5,000
Temporary hides	£ 7,000
Footpath upgrades (assume 1500m)	£ 54,000
Coldharbour Lagoon (by Environment Agency)	£ 0
Design Fees @ 19% of construction cost	£ 12,500
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 1,500
Design/Site Contingency	£ 8,000
total	£ 88,000

PHASE 2b

New footpaths (assume 1000m)	£162,500
Permanent bird hides	£ 15,000
Design Fees @ 7% of construction cost	£ 12,500
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 1,500
Design/Site Contingency	£ 5,000
total	£ 196,500

PHASE 4

Construction costs (including preliminaries)	£5,000,000
Consultant Fees @ 10% of construction cost	£ 500,000
Other Fees and Expenses	£ 20,000
Design/Site Contingency	£ 250,000
total	£5,800,000

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- some volunteer labour may be appropriate at all stages
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs

14.05 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding for Phase 2 of the scheme could be part of an overall bid for European monies with some additional funding possible from the Environment Agency, Kent Wildlife Trust, Natural England and possibly RSPB funds.

Phase 4 funding source would need to be reviewed nearer the time subsequent to a confirmed implementation of the necessary policy, as part of an overall feasibility exercise with the possible inclusion of major charitable bodies such as the KWT and RSPB.

Timing

Phase 2: 2 to 5 years depending on funding

Phase 4: 5 - 25 years depending on funding and overall success of strategic objectives

Implementation Sequence

Phase 2

No critical path identified but links to Environment Agency proposals for the re-location / enhancement of Coldharbour Lagoon would be advantageous. It is likely that the Environment Agency would be the lead body for phase 2 proposals.

Phase 4

- Liaise with RSPB and other agencies / landowners
- Liaise with Shoreline Management Group
- Review implementation as part of feasibility study at later stage

SUMMARY POINTS

- Major green tourism project but without critical path
- Multi-agency and jurisdictional group to plan the way forward
- Early implementation of modest first phase possible with EA
- Contribution to BAP targets
- Later review and liasion with KWT / RSPB for feasibility of Phase 4 wetland, subject to a confirmed implementation of SMP policy

walking & cycling facilities

Project Summary:

A range of routes and small facilities to encourage more walking and cycling to support the green tourism approach and to attract more visitors to increase the potential of small local businesses.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH-EAST COASTAL STRATEGY
- *Support business start-ups and collaboration*
- *Release the enterprie potential of creative and tourism industries and expand the cultural offer*
- *Maximise the connectivity along the coast.*

THE KENT AND CANTERBURY WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGIES
- *Improved cycle signing, marking and parking*
- *Implement a network of routes*

LOCAL PLAN
- *R13: Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*

NATURAL EAST KENT
- *Development of green tourism destination*
- *Reculver as a cycling hub*

CANTRYSIDE ACCESS IMPROVEMENT PLAN
- *Policies described at Volume 1 3.5*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- *Develop new infrastructure and facilities*
- *Encourage rural regeneration through walking and cycling*
- *Include local people and partners in tourism*

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN
- *Objective 1:To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 2:To achieve national standards of excellence for the country park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *improved wayfinding and access*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths*
- *Establish clear linkages to the surrounding area*
- *coordinate management bringing together public and private interests*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*

15.01 Current Position and Proposals

Reculver is already popular with cyclists and walkers and the various policies that support further encouragement and growth is an important aspect of the masterplan and the emphasis on green tourism.

Kent County Council currently promotes a circular walk from Reculver Country Park within its 'East Kent' circular walks pack, and are also already putting in a cycling route with earmarked locations for cycle parking and signage as shown in the diagram below.

During consultations, cycling and walking was recognised as a growing activity but there was perhaps not an appreciation by some local businesses as to the significance and potential that this visitor market could bring to the local economy.

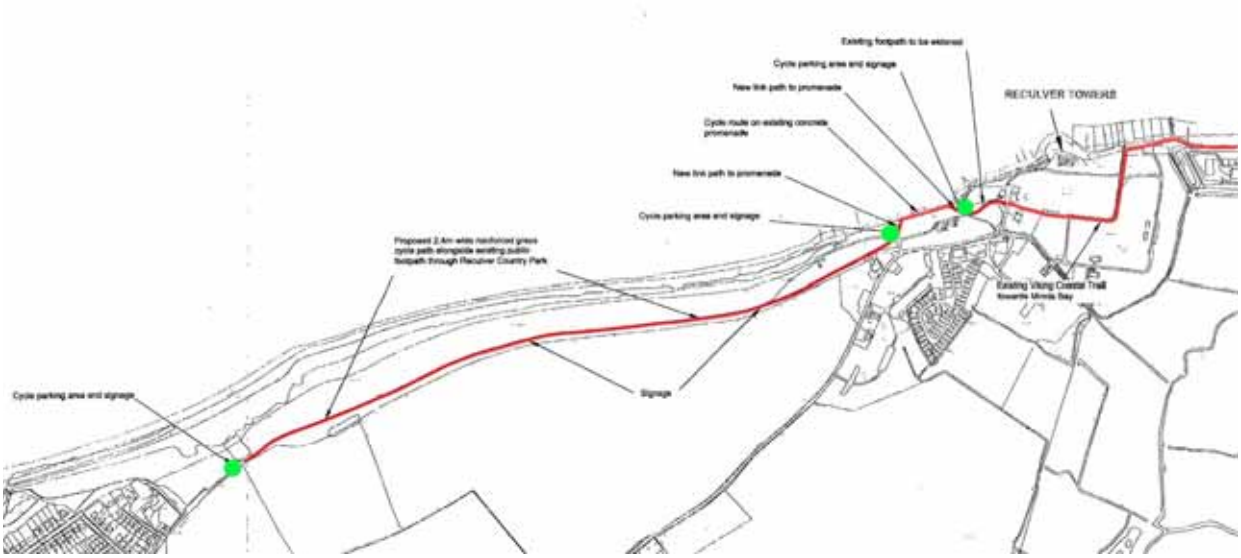
This project plan aims to reinforce the current public sector commitment towards cycling and walking (refer diagrams below and Volume 1, Chapter 3) with the intention that the private sector may be encouraged to consider additional facilities and the potential synergy with alternative accommodation types (refer Project Plan 11) and the retail and cafe provision for such a potentially large market (refer also Project Plans 1-6). Pedestrian access will be retained wherever new/ amendet cycle routes are proposed.

Specific additional proposals are:

- deliver conected cycling opportunities ay Herne Bay
- the upgrade, maintenance and promotion of circular walks based on the Wantsum Walks;
- assist and be included in promotional material produced by Explore Kent and Sustrans;
- high quality cycle racks associated with the hub; and,
- the potential for inclusion of a bike hire / sales / repair outlet within the frontage development.

Development at the proposals should be in consultation with Natural East Kent, Kent County Council's Countryside and Access Service (CAS) and in accordance with CAIP guidelines.

Although not part of this project plan consideration should be given of cycle hire/storage for local residents and holiday makers in conjunction with opportunities for cycle hire for day visitors to/from Herne Bay

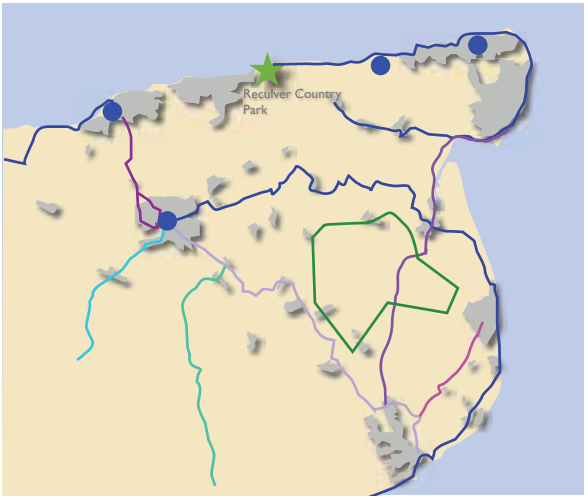


Canterbury City Council's committed cycle route, cycle parking and signage proposals through Reculver Country Park

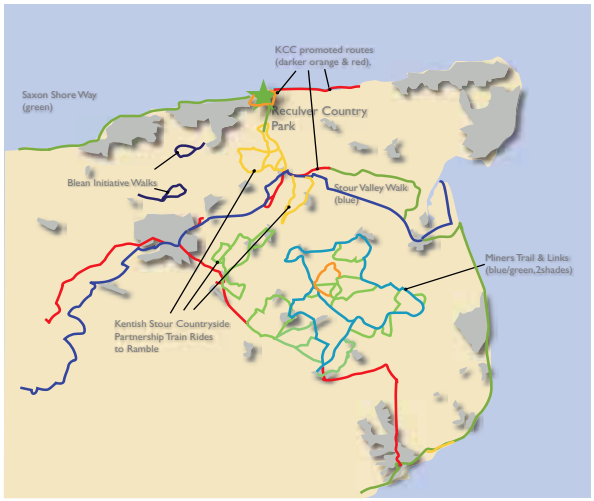
2: Extracts from Natural East Kent's and the draft Access Plan

Reculver Country Park
The Blean
Stodmarsh NNR / Grove Ferry Picnic Site
Pegwell Sandwich Bay
Fowlmead Country Park
Gateway to the White Cliffs Country Park

Kent countryside sites showing Reculver



Current known cycle hire outlets - note Reculver's central position


KCC promoted routes (darker orange & red),
Saxon Shore Way (green)
Reculver Country Park
Blean Initiative Walks
Stour Valley Walk (blue)
Miners Trail & Links (blue/green,2shades)
Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership Train Rides to Ramble

Promoted walking routes

Unmaintained walking routes highlighting Wantsum Walks and Kentish Stour routes around Reculver

NEK's draft Access Strategy raises the Wantsum Walks (a series of circular routes produced by KCC in 1995) as a key issue. Whilst still on OS maps they are no longer maintained and promotional material is limited. NEK are currently discussing whether they should be reinstated. The development of Reculver as a 'hub' really requires that there are circular walks around it, and with a limited rights of way network any new promoted routes would likely follow much of the same routes as the Wantsum Walks anyway.

15.02 Reinstatement of the Wantsum Walks

A range of circular walks of different lengths will assist and attract a wide range of visitors of different abilities. The diagram below proposes 5 circular routes around Reculver based on the Wantsum Walks network (These go beyond KCC's Countryside Access Service have committed to maintain as promoted routes. CAS should be included in discussions for all route proposals to meet joint objectives)

It should be noted that if, in the long term, there is a managed retreat to the east as a result of the Shoreline Management Plan, than the cycle link from Birchington will be lost and should be relocated, in consultation with Thanet District Council to keep the Viking Coastal Trail. The promotion of these are covered in Project Plan 5.

Light yellow:	Short routes 5.5 km - 6.5 km
Dark yellow:	Medium route 12 km
Orange:	Medium-long 16 km
Red:	Long 28 km

Proposed circular routes from Reculver

Walking routes for all

15.03 High quality cycle racks in the 'hub'

In accordance with CCC's plans the provision of high quality and arts based cycle racks in the hub area would increase the sense of committment to cycling and to local distinctiveness.

15.04 Cycle hire / repair / sales facility in the 'hub'

The proposal to establish cycle hire supports the development of leisure cycling within east Kent as set out in the Natural East Kent Area Access Plan and is welcomed by NEK and some interaction is encouraged to develop these plans.

Reculver should also be considered in conjunction with Herne Bay when looking at opportunities for cycle hire facilities. KCC supports on site cycle hire provision for users of local accomodatio, but encourages day visitor provision from Herne Bay, to encourage sustainable transport to Reculver.

To support the public committment to cycling it is hoped that the private sector may invest in additional facilities for cyclists. More detail on this project is contained in Project Plan 6; Business Opportunity Plan.

Diagram of CCC route and potential locations of cycle parking and hire shop

High quality and distinctive cycle racks

Cycling at Reculver

Proposed view looking east along Reculver Lane with Bike Hire - refer Project Plans 6 and 11

Lively attractive cafe with weather protection

New business opportunities

15.05 Proposal Budget Allowances

The proposed circular walking routes need to be ratified through NEK's Access Strategy and fall mainly outside of the study are so no budget costs are considered at this stage.

Cycle racks costs are included within CCC's current committments although costs for enhanced racks as shown are indicated below.

Costs for a bike hire business are dependant on scope and size. Overall costs of the business and of the frontage development are considered in Project Plans 6 and 11.

CYCLE RACKS

Racks	£	4,500
Paved surrounds	£	1,500
Design Fees @ 20% of construction cost	£	1,200
Design/Site Contingency	£	1,000
total	£	8,500

15.06 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Some Sustrans funding is already in place for the cycle link and facilities proposed by KCC/Jacobs for cultural trail cycle route from Whitstable to Margate using the Viking Coastal trail and a new path along the Wantsum Walk and Saxon Shore Way via Marshside and St Nicholas at Wade.

Any increase in use from business related traffic would generate a requirement for S106 contributions.

Timing

Cycle route is due for completion late summer 2008.

The cycle hire facility will be subject to planning permission and market forces but it would be hoped to go forward with the frontage development in Phase 2 of the masterplan - 2 to 5 years depending on funding.

Implementation Sequence

The cycle way is currently underway and NEKs strategy is due for completion this year.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Key walking and cycling visitor market fully supported by the public sector
- Projects underway
- Potential for private sector opportunities

environmental upgrade

Project Summary:

A series of mini projects to generally improve the general environment of Reculver and the country park. These fall outside some of the main physical projects but are equally important to raise the visual and amenity quality of the townscape and landscape.

Strategic Objectives:

LOCAL PLAN POLICY R13
- *Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*

NATURAL EAST KENT
- *Development of green tourism destination*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- *Encourage rural regeneration*
- *Encourage local visitors and VFR market*

RECULVER COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN
- *Objective 1: To develop Reculver County Park as a quality attraction for tourist markets*
- *Objective 3: To involve the community in the management of the country park*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *providing high quality sustainable facilities, improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *improved wayfinding and access*
- *optimising existing assets and strengths*
- *changing current perceptions and the profile of Reculver*

redundant services

unwelcoming entrance

poorly located and unattractive

disability access

caravan locations

redundant structure

uninspired furniture

low aspiration

clutter and maintenance

16.01 Current Position

The general environment at Reculver is very varied. Some areas are extremely attractive, while others are extremely poor and detract from the experience of visiting. The following are some of the items that need addressing to create a high quality hub for East Kent:

- poor signage and interpretation generally
- unco-ordinated and uninspiring street furniture and lighting
- roadway safety issues (especially at eastern corner)
- limited access for wheelchairs to country park, and Scheduled Ancient Monument
- caravans very close to road opposite Blue Dolphin
- view of caravan sites from country park detracts from enjoyment of view of Towers
- obtrusive overhead cables/posts for services
- varied maintenance of soft landscape

16.02 Proposal Description

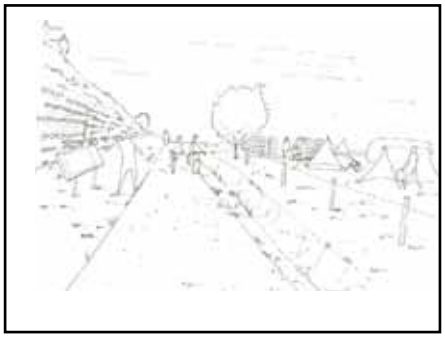
The proposals are spread across the site and it is beyond the scope of the masterplan to look at every area in detail. However the following 'mini-projects' cover some of the key areas requiring general improvement. These are illustrated and described on the following pages.

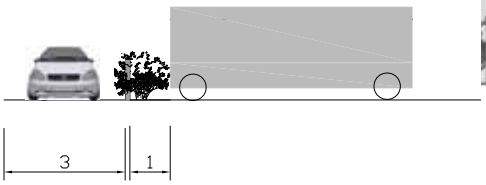
- Reculver Lane and 'Roman Wall' lane:
- Eastern Corner of Reculver Lane:
- Area to east of Scheduled Monument:
- Landscape Screening to Blue Dolphin and Camping and Caravanning Club Site
- Picnic Areas at Bishopstone
- Interpretation Trail
- Furniture, lighting, services and signage across site

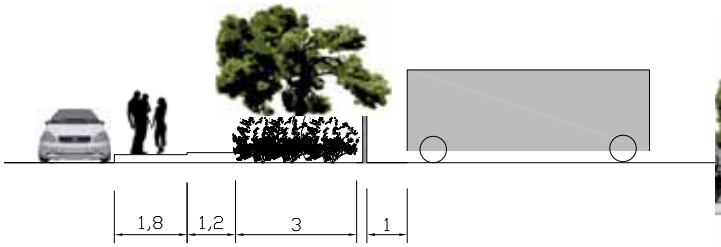
Reculver Lane and 'Roman Wall' Lane

Both of these roads are currently tarmacadam finish with varaible provision of pavement. The lane around the perimeter of the Roman Wall is a private road owned by the Environment Agency but is identified as the key cycling route to and from the east of Reculver. A rolled or sprayed gravel surface would enhance to this and the eastern end of Reculver Lane would highlight to vehicles that these are 'special' areas where pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles will mix. Visually the appearance would also suggest a rural park rather than a basic road. The southern pavement to Reculver Lane is proposed to be enhanced in width and treatment. Some sale of private land would be required to achieve this. Also landscape screening of the caravans that face the road in this location will increase privacy and sound protection while improving the visual aspects of central Reculver.

Location





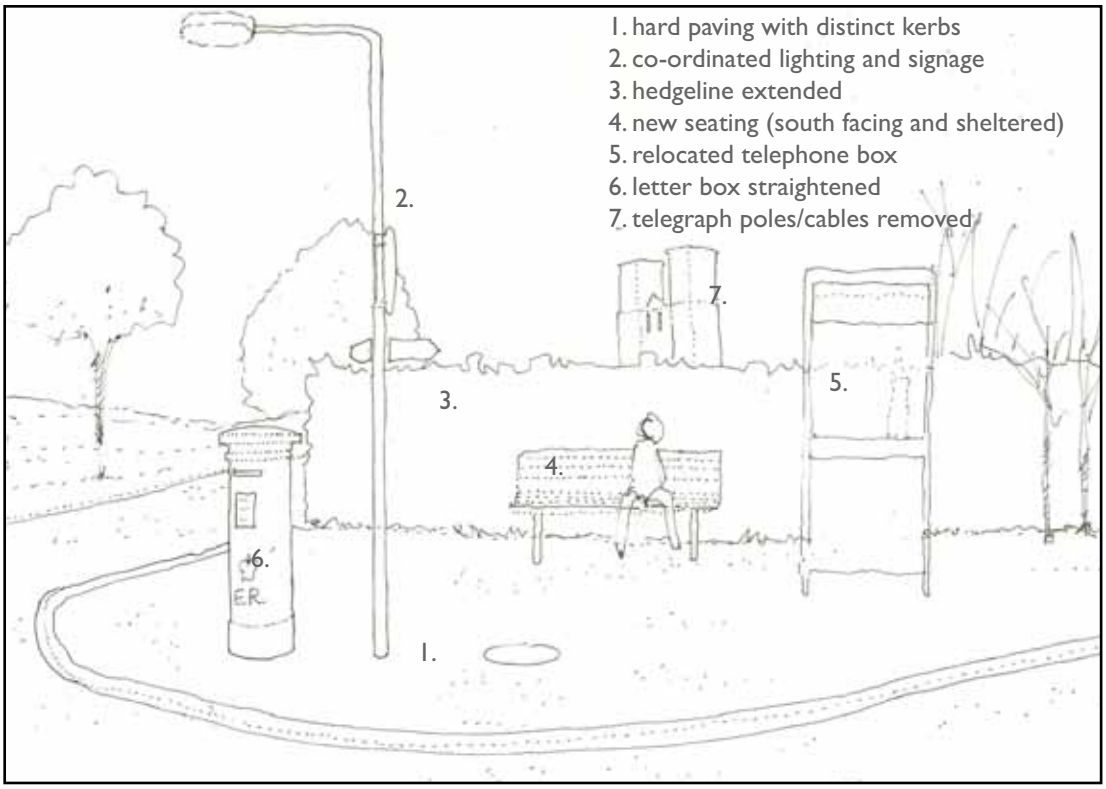


eastern corner of reculver lane

This is a key corner and marks the Wantsum Walk as well as the entrance to the Camping and Caravanning Club Site. Being opposite the shop and incorporating public telephone and post box means this will be well used by pedestrians. The current area is cluttered, unmaintained and univiting. It is proposed to create a positive paved space that can be used to meet or wait or use the facilities. Subject to utility company approvals, the telegraph poles would be removed, revealing a view of Reculver Towers. The telephone box would be located and seating added facing south.

Location

Current view



Proposals (note frontage development not shown)

Area to east of scheduled monument

This is a key gateway to Reculver for people arriving by bicycle or on foot from the east. The burnt listed building is clearly an eyesore and is unlikely to be renovated. The area between the sea wall and the northern edge of the camping and caravanning site is an unresolved area with no apparent usage. Subject to approval from the Environment Agency and Southern Water it is proposed to clear all the structures in this area and create an area of vegetated shingle, similar to that adjacent to the visitor centre, whilst maintaining the access roads. The proposed vegetated shingle area would need to have a clear management plan to avoid any garden invasive plants growing in the area. This would create a more positive gateway to Reculver (if combined with quality heritage interpretation and orientation panels) and create a better setting for the camping site which will hopefully be 'showcasing' innovative and sustainable accommodation at this northern edge.

Location

View from east

View from west

Proposed new area of vegetated shingle

Landscape screening CCC and Blue Dolphin sites

Native tree and shrub screening belts are propsed to the northwest edge of the Blue Dolphin site and the east and south east edges of the CCC site. The purpose of this is for visual amenity purposes and to enhance the setting and vistas to and from the Reculver Towers and the country park. These vegetation belts will also increase biodiversity and give shelter to birds and small mammals. (Any maintenance works related to tree or bush cutting should be avoided in bird nesting season, where health and safety is not an overrriding concern. However, in instances where vegetation has been previously checked for bird use and found to be clear, vegetative works may still be carried out within nesting bird season).

Location

Blue Dolphin with Waterways beyond from country park - screening proposed

View to eastern edge of CCC site - screening proposed

Picnic areas at Bishopstone

This is a key viewing point and entry to the country park from the west. Currently there is a green field with a few picnic tables scattered in no particular location. Paths and routes are not clearly marked and the steps down heading to Bishopstone Glen are poor with no handrails. The car park being located at this point opens up the opportunity for wheelchair users to enjoy part of the park and the vistas to the wind farm and back to the towers. It is proposed to enhance the usage of this area for picnic and general amenity by improving the layout, quantity and specification of furniture. Reinforced turf for wheelchair usage would allow greater access and this could be a key location for part of the interpretation trail proposed on the next sheet. This would be a good location to site a telescope or binoculars to further enhance the enjoyment of all and to optimise the raised location.

Location

Uninspiring furniture

Step improvements

Great potential

Key vistas

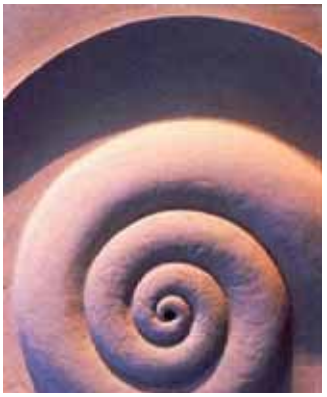
Picnic and amenity

Disabled access

Interpretation trail

There are many interesting aspects to Reculver and its environs with its rich human and natural history, the ongoing battle with the sea, the changing leisure and tourism elements and an oyster hatchery. Currently the key aspects are summarised on information boards at certain points around the site - mainly at car park entrances. Project Plan 04 explores an overall interpretation strategy. This will be critical to understand fully how to express and communicate the information, hopefully in an entertaining and inspiring way with a wider variety of media. An interpretation trail across the site would be an excellent way to draw this together with the existing cycle and walking routes as well as creating route in itself.

Location



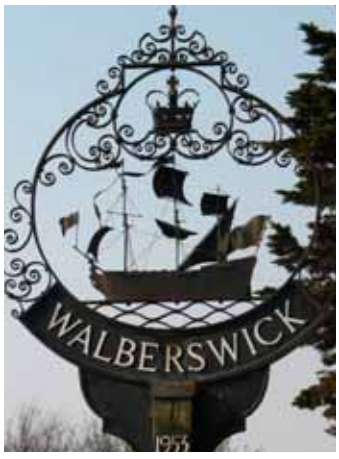
Furniture, lighting and signage 'palette' across the site

Allen Scott Ltd

Interpretative signage - hierarchy, clarity, branding, co-ordination of materials

Proprietary lighting - low key, robust, varied sources

Proprietary furniture - simple, contemporary, robust, co-ordinated sustainable materials



Bespoke furniture at key locations co-ordinated with artwork/interpretation

16.03 Proposal Budget Allowances

RECULVER LANE IMPROVEMENTS

Removals - clear old fencing and vegetation	£	2,500
Removals - clear old signs and furniture	£	1,000
Re-surface existing road with bound gravel	£	26,000
Allowance for raised cross-overs in concrete units	£	4,500
Signage and markings	£	2,500
Design Fees @ 12% of construction cost	£	4,500
Other Fees and Expenses	£	1,500
Design/Site Contingency	£	4,000
total	£	46,500

ROMAN WALL FOOTPATH IMPROVEMENTS

Removals - clear old fencing and vegetation	£	2,500
Re-surface existing road with bound gravel	£	26,500
Refurbish gated access and paved threshold	£	1,500
Interpretation - priced in Project Plan 13		
Restoration of wall - priced in Project Plan 13		
Caravan club boundary and ditch - priced in Project Plan 12		
Design Fees @ 12% of construction cost	£	3,500
Design/Site Contingency	£	3,500
total	£	37,500

EASTERN CORNER VERGE (OPPOSITE CAFE)

Removals - clear old fencing and vegetation	£	2,500
Seating area and minor landscape improvements	£	7,000
New hedge planting and fence	£	1,500
Re-site letter box	£	500
New lighting column	£	3,500
Design Fees @ 20% of construction cost	£	3,000
Design/Site Contingency	£	2,500
total	£	20,500

AREA TO EAST OF S.A.M. (BURNT-OUT COTTAGE AREA)

Removals - clear burnt-out cottage and paving surrounds	£	7,000
Re-surface paved area	£	4,000
Formation of colonising stone habitat	£	7,500
Signage and interpretation - priced elsewhere		
Design Fees @ 20% of construction cost	£	4,000
Design/Site Contingency	£	2,500
total	£	25,500

16.03 Proposal Budget Allowances continued

BLUE DOLPHIN CARAVAN PARK FRONTAGE
-subject to discussion with landowner

Removals - clear old fencing and vegetation	£	2,500
Kerbing and grass verge - turfed	£	5,000
Pine trees and planting strip including topsoil	£	16,000
New 1.8m close board fence	£	3,000
Allowance for moving caravans	£	2,000
Design Fees @ 15% of construction cost	£	4,500
Other Fees and Expenses	£	1,000
Design/Site Contingency	£	3,500
total	£	37,500

PICNIC AREA - BISHOPSTONE

New tar spray chip pathways to start of glen path	£	4,000
Improvements to existing steps	£	5,000
4 no. Picnic tables and hardstandings	£	10,500
Signage and interpretation - priced elsewhere		
Design Fees @ 15% of construction cost	£	3,000
Design/Site Contingency	£	2,500
total	£	25,000

INTERPRETATION TRAIL

12 no Interpretation boards inset in surround	£	10,000
Design Fees @ 35% of construction cost	£	3,500
Design/Site Contingency	£	1,000
total	£	14,500

FURNITURE, LIGHTING, SERVICES

4 no main welcome signs	£	4,000
8 no directional signs	£	6,000
10no benches	£	12,000
Allowance for other furniture	£	3,000
Allowance for additional lighting	£	6,000
Removal of telegraph poles & re-siting of overheads - budget	£	18,000
Design Fees @ 25% of construction cost	£	12,500
Design/Site Contingency	£	6,000
total	£	67,500

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs

Note: Some cost savings could be made combining contracts and using tar spray chip surfacing instead of bound gravels

7.04 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding would be part of an overall bid from capital funding programmes with some potential contributions from highways maintenance budgets and Section 106 agreements arising from frontage developments and Caravanning and Camping Club proposals.

Timing

It would provide a positive message for Reculver and a catalyst for private sector investment in the frontage projects if these environmental improvements were implemented at the same time as the village green construction or as a series of stage projects relating to frontages.

Phase 1 and 2 depending on funding sources

Implementation Sequence

- CCC to consult with local businesses, highways and Southern Water (cottage)
- CCC to appoint consultants to develop schemes
- Conclude funding/scope discussions
- Assuming planning granted CCC to instruct consultants to progress to tender
- Appoint contractor

SUMMARY POINTS

- Co-ordinated environmental improvements will raise the quality of the site and add value to all the other projects
- They can be implemented together, in groups or individually as funding permits
- Prioritise 'hub' improvements.

road improvements

Project Summary:

Small scale improvements to the approch to Reculver inlcuding signage and passing places on Reculver Lane.

Strategic Objectives:

SOUTH-EAST COASTAL STRATEGY
- *Maximise the connectivity along the coast.*

LOCAL PLAN
- *R13: Enhances the 'attraction' of Reculver*

CANTERBURY DISTRICT TOURISM STRATEGY
- *Develop new infrastructure*
- *Include local people and partners in tourism*

Relevant Masterplan Principles:

- *improving the experience for visitors and local residents*
- *improved wayfinding and access*

Strategy to resolve traffic problems at Reculver School

Creation of passing places on Reculver Lane

17.01 Current Position and Proposals

Although the masterplan study area is set by the R13 policy area from the Local Plan, there are certain projects that need to go beyond this particular boundary.

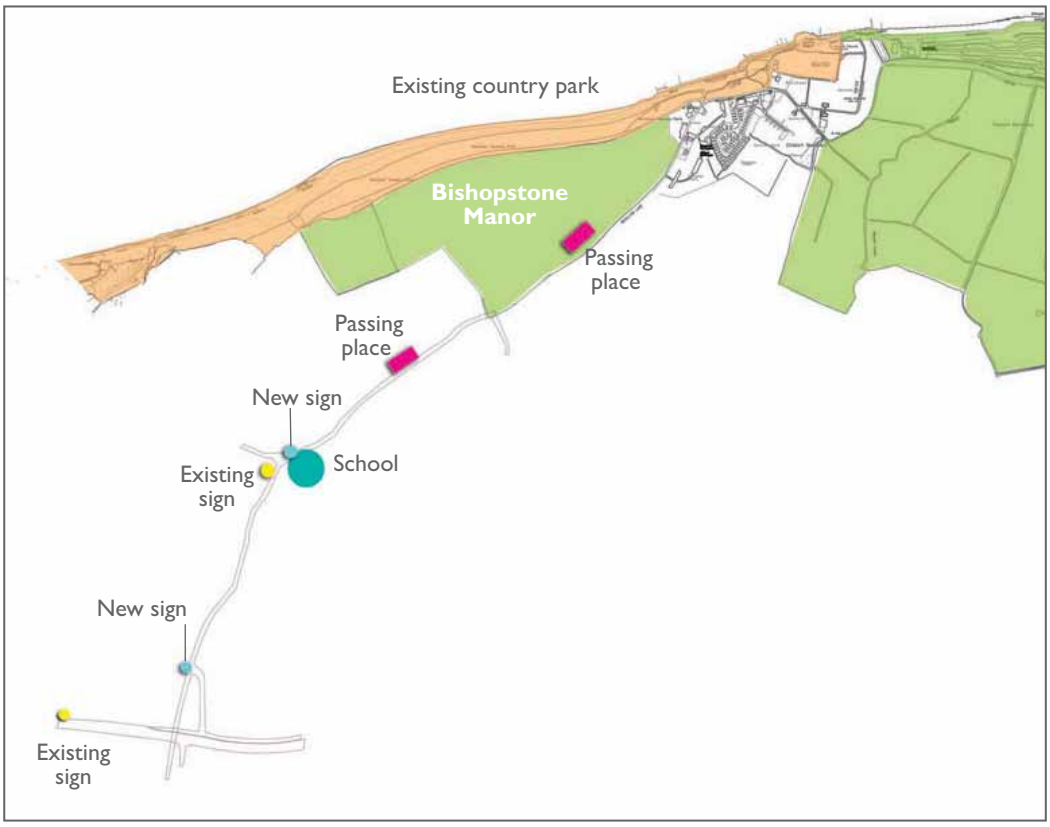
Reculver Lane
The width of Reculver Lane is perceived as a problem by local businesses in attracting greater numbers of visitors, particularly towing caravans, due to lack of passing places. The primary school in Hillborough exacerbates this problem at parents drop-off and collection times due to parking down Reculver Lane.

On a basic access level, improvements to the road to Reculver would assist flow of traffic. Whilst major road improvements are very unlikely to be funded there is reasonable opportunity to create at least two passing places along Reculver Lane subject to CCC highways approval. This would allow larger vehicles to get past each other.
Because much of the access routes to Reculver is in 'Sunken lane' with high grass banks, creating effective passing bays will require some regrading or retaining elements. Founding for such improvements should be sought through S106 contributions from increases in business related traffic and additional maintenance founding sought from Kent Highway Services.

With the likely increase in traffic generated by the proposed touring pitches as well as general development of the site as a strategic hub, carrying out a more detailed transport study would be appropriate. This could tie into other elements of public transport/green travel plans in other areas.

Reculver School
The other traffic problem at Reculver School clearly impacts on movements to and from Reculver at certain times of the day during termtime. The School has already tried moving certain proposals forward and it is expected that the proposed Reculver Co-ordinator (refer Project Plan 1) would continue to assist/monitor to help resolve this issue.

Signage
There is signage to the country park from the Thanet Way but it is considered lacking at the Maypole Road junction and at Hillborough.



Signage and passing places and a strategy for resolving traffic problems at Reculver School is required

17.02 Proposal Budget Allowances

PASSING PLACES AND SIGNS

Construction costs (including preliminaries)	£	7,000
Design Fees @ 20% of construction cost	£	1,500
Other Fees and Expenses	£	1,000
Design/Site Contingency	£	1,000
total	£	10,500

- costs based on 2008 prices ie no allowance for inflation
- these are approximate budget allowances and not detailed costings
- VAT excluded
- no allowance made for legal fees or land costs
- no allowance for client staff costs

17.03 Next Steps

Funding Strategy

Funding is most likely secured from KCC or Canterbury City Council highway budgets with some potential top-up from 106 agreements for the toruing pitches from the Caravanning and Camping Club.

Timing

Subject to highway permissions and discussions with landowners the project would hopefully go forward prior to the opening of the Caravanning and Camping Club touring pitches opening.

Implementation Sequence

- Discuss with highways departments
- Discuss and agree locations and land acquisition with landowners
- Discussion and negotiation with Caravanning and Camping Club
- Conclude funding/scope discussions
- Assuming planning granted CCC to instruct consultants to progress to tender
- Appoint contractor

SUMMARY POINTS

- Minor improvements but would answer many concerns from local businesses, residents and visitors cocerning access problems on Reculver Lane.
- Signage from the Thanet Way would assist and encourage more visitors to come to the country park.